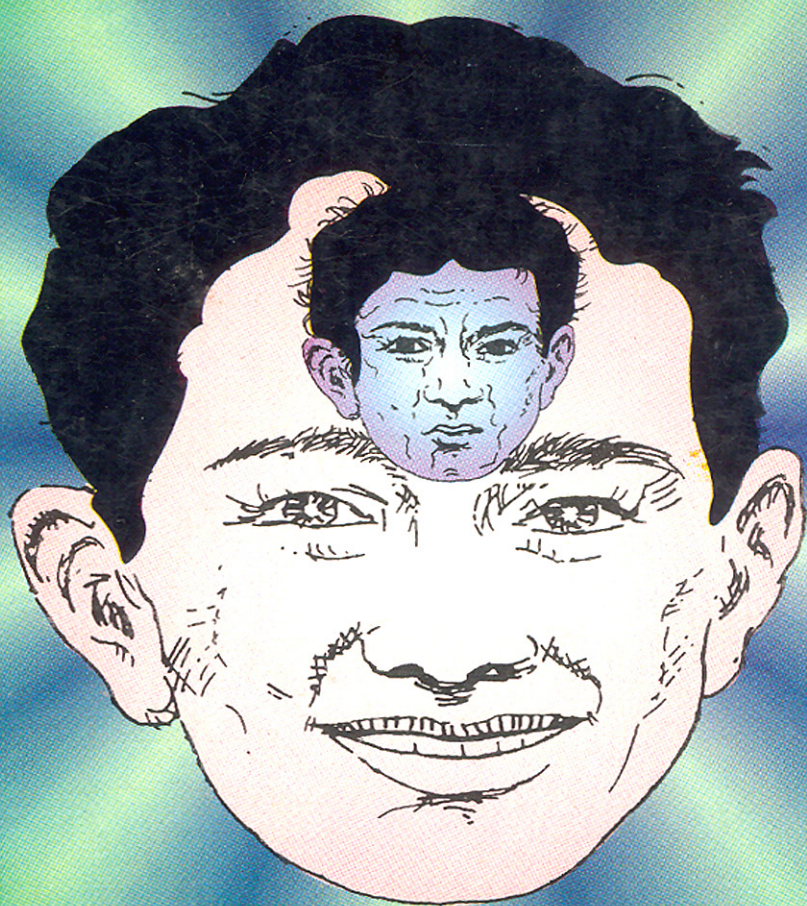


CONCEPTUAL STRESS

UNDERSTANDING & MANAGEMENT



Shriniwas J. Kashalikar

CONCEPTUAL STRESS

UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGEMENT

CONCEPTUAL STRESS

UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGEMENT

BY

Dr. Shriniwas Janardan Kashalikar
M.B.B.S., M.D., F.I.C.G., F.F.F.B.M.S. (USA)



BHALANI PUBLISHING HOUSE
MUMBAI, INDIA

© 2001 Bhalani Publishing House, Mumbai, INDIA

All rights reserved

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN 81 85578 47 8

PRINTED IN INDIA

Published by:

Bhalani Publishing House,
11, Mavawala Building,
Opp. K.E.M. Hospital,
Parel, Mumbai-400 012.
INDIA

E-mail : bhalani@bom3.vsnl.net.in

Typeset by :

Pravin Shah

Coverpage design by:

D. Wadekar, Mumbai

Printed by:

Ashish Arts, Mumbai

PRAYER **[THE CONTENT AND CONCEPT]**



SHRI GANESHAAYA NAMAH

Before beginning to write, I offer my prayers to Lord Shri Ganesha who is the God of realization for enabling me to express health promoting content with accuracy in this book. The meaning of the expression "God of realization" is very interesting and profound. In the nature there are various divine 'powers' or 'energies' and express or manifest themselves in different forms. Lord Ganesh is the source of experience of pure knowledge in a human being. It is therefore customary and appropriate to pray Lord Ganesh before starting any writing work.

Since the realization of truth is the prerequisite to accurate vision, decision, commensurate desire and intention to act, conviction and strength to act, accurate action, it is appropriate to pray Lord Ganesh before starting any work. These all constitute HOLISTIC HEALTH or SWADHARMA.

Hence it is said

VAKRATUNDA MAHAAKAAYA
SURYAKOTISAMAPRABHA
NIRVIGHNAM KURU ME DEVA
SARVAKARYESHU SARVADAA

Which means

O Lord Ganesha with beautifully twisted trunk and gigantic body you are bright like billions of suns. Please very work of mine devoid of deficiency and defeat.

Now I offer my prayers to the goddess of knowledge i.e. Sarasvati. Because she gives the ability to transform realization into thoughts and thoughts into language, either spoken or written. She also gives the ability to grasp various forms of art and knowledge and their expression in different forms.

Hence I pray



YAAKUNDENDUTUSHAARHAARDHAVALAA
YASHUBHRAVASTRAVRUTAA
YAAVEENAAVAR DANDAMANDITAKARAA
YAASHVETAPADMAASANAA
YAABRAHMAACHYUTA

SHANKLARAPRABHUTIBHIRDEVAISADA AVANDITAA
SAA MAM PAATU SARASVATI BHAGAVATI
NIHSHESHAJAADYA APAHAA

Which means

Oh goddess Sarasvati who is fair complexioned like flowers of KUNDA [JASMINE], moon and snow showers, clad and in white clothes with hands adorned by VEENA-the string instrument [which produces divine melodies], sitting on the white lotus being worshipped by BRAHMAA, ACHYUTA, SHANKARA and other deities and one who destroys the shackling fossilizing ignorance, please protect me [from ignorance and evils born out of it]!!

I also pray

SHULKAAM
BRAHMAVICHAAARASAARAPARAMAMAADYAM
JAGADVYAAPINEEM
VEENAPUSTAKADHAARINEEM ABHAYADAAM
JADYANDHAKAARAPAHAAM
HASTE SPHAATIKAMALIKAAM VIDADHATEEM
PADMAASANESANSTHITAAM
VANDETAAM PARAMESHVAREEM
BHAGAVATEEM BUDDHIPRADAAM
SHAARADAAM

Which means

Oh enlightening Shaarada goddess, who is fair complexioned means full of SATVAGUNA [conscientiousness], the essence of the knowledge of self realization, the source of energies encompassing the whole universe, holding the VEENA and book, destroyer of darkness of ignorance and thereby making you fearless, holding the rosary of SPHATIK beads, sitting on lotus I prostrate in front of you and offer my salutations to you.

Now I also pray the guru principle.



GURURBRAHMAA GURURVISHNU
GURURDEVO MAHESHVARAA
GURUH SAKSHAAT PARABRAHMA
TASMAI SHRI GURUVE NAMAH

I refer this by the word principle because it is a cosmic principle BRAHMA or the origin of the universe which embodies all the qualities of the three deities BRAHMA, VISHNU and MAHESH representing three GUNAS viz. SATVA, RAJA and TAMA.

SATVA is nothing else but crystal clear conscience governed perceptions. Feelings and actions.

RAJA is ego driven perceptions, feelings and actions and TAMA means ignorance driven perceptions, feelings and actions.

This principle manifests through either human body, scriptures, through dreams and even through various manifestations in the nature! The guru principle is said to embody three deities or three gunas because a loving guru takes beyond the three gunas viz. SATVA, RAJA and TAMA because guru takes us from the ignorance to knowledge.

Now I pray goddess Gauri. I reverently offer my salutations to her and pray her to bless me for success of this book in every possible way. May she bless all those concerned with this book in every walk of life in every possible way.

SARVAMANGAL MAANGALYE
SHIVE SARVAARTHAASADHIKE
SHARANYE TRYAMBAKE
GAURI NARAYANEEM NAMOSTUTE

Which means

Gauri, Narayani, Tryambaka are the names of the divine energy which manifests in the form of regulator of fulfilling elegance and success in every activity. I prostrate in front and salute her again and again.

After these prayers I offer my prayers to Lord Narayana who is traditionally worshipped in our family, for His blessings. He is the supreme consciousness. In fact it is He who is responsible for all this that is being written

JANGAMAAJANGAMAMCHEDAM
JAGANNAARAYANODBHAVAM
YOGODNYAANAM TATHAA SAANKHYAM
VIDYAASHILPAADIKARMA CHA

Which means

Plants and animals have developed from NARAYANA

in as much as YOGA, DNYAANA, SAANKHYA, ARTS, CRAFTS are originated from Him.

Hence I wish to pray

NAMOSTVANATAAYA SAHASRAMURTAYE
SAHASRAPADAATKSHISHIRORUBAAHAVE
SAHASRANAAMNE PURUSHAAYA SHAASHVATE
SAHASRAKOTI YUGADHAARINE NAMAH

I offer my humble salutations, to Ananta [Lord Narayana] which means the infinite, who has thousands of forms, thousands of feet, thousands of eyes, thousands of heads, thousands of chests, thousands of arms, thousands of names and who is eternal PURUSHA [supreme consciousness] occupying thousands of billions of epochs called YUGA.

Now I pray all the yogis, saints, prophets and the rishis. They are the manifestations or incarnations of the supreme consciousness and have been enlightening, empowering and guiding the mankind for ages. I pray that they bless this book and enable it to serve the mankind

Lastly I pray for the welfare of the universe.

SARVETRAH SUKHINAH SANTU
SARVE SANTU NIRAMAYAH
SARVE BHADRANI PASHYANTU
MA KASCHIT DUKKHAMAPNUYAT

[Let everyone be happy, healthy and well meaning and let there be no grief in anyone's life]

With this feeling underlying this book I offer the book with utmost reverence at the lotus feet of Lord Narayana. Many of us may have strong objection to prayers. They may feel that such praying is an indication of weakness, diffidence and dependence. According to some this can be even paranoid behavior. Even as I have no intention to change this point of view [as that can happen only through one's experience and not by mere explanations], it is still thought appropriate to give explanation which

may prove helpful to the concerned ones. However it is not expected that anybody agrees with whatever is written. It is always a healthy thing to read, think over and verify the contents rather than accepting them without scrutiny and verification.

These prayers are meant for getting strength from the infinite cosmic powers, of which we are manifestations or extensions. The cosmic energies, gods and goddesses can be compared to the powerhouses and we can be compared with the electric bulbs, which are the extensions of the electricity from the powerhouses.

In case there are blocks in the wiring, then the bulbs will not illumine adequately. In such case the only way to illumine the bulb would be remove the blocks and facilitate free flow of electricity. In case of human beings 'blocks' develop due to natural development of ego, pettiness and superficial values. These 'blocks' can be effectively removed by the prayers and also by chanting or remembering the name of God.

We can take another example. We are leaves of a life tree. Because of ego we tend to identify ourselves as isolated, alienated, disconnected, discrete, disjointed 'leaves'! This makes us weak, petty, arrogant, diffident, cynical, depressed and frustrated. Prayers are like reestablishing the link with roots of the tree of which we are the leaves!

DEDICATION

PRAYENA DEVA MUNAYAH SWAVIMUKTIKAMA
MAUNAM CHARANTI VIJANENA
PARARTHA NISHTHA
NAITANVIHAYA KRUPANAN SWAVIMUKTI EKO
NANYAM TADASYA SHARANAM
BHRAMATONUPASHYE

Oh Lord, in general, most of the great saints, sages, yogis and rishis renounce the world, live in seclusion and observe silence in search of salvation/liberation for themselves.

Since you are the only savior for my billions of brothers and since they can not get salvation from anywhere else [in case I do not seek it from you for them], I do not want to be a mean person to seek liberation for myself alone.

So says the great Pralhada as is articulated in SHRIMAT BHAGAVATAM.

This is especially important in view of the fact that though stress [and hence conceptual stress also] is a universal phenomenon, it is not understood by everyone. Only a few fortunate ones would be able to understand and manage it. It is their privilege and DHARMA to help others in managing stress. In this regard it is interesting to note that in these days neither individual liberation nor individual stress management are possible! They are intricately and inseparably bound with the liberation and stress management of billions others, who can neither read, nor understand this book and who can not manage stress.

Bhagiratha [who is said to have brought the Ganges from heaven to the earth] and Prometheus [who is said to have stolen fire from the gods] to save the mankind and many others have set examples for us to follow.

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

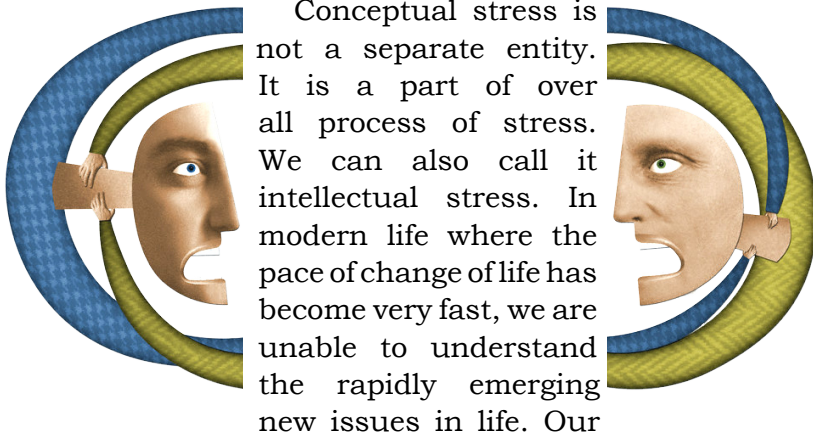
TO
THE ETERNAL LIGHT THAT HAS BEEN ENLIVENING
THIS UNIVERSE AND ENLIGHTENING THE LIFE OF
MILLIONS THROUGH MILENNIA

AND

TO
MY LATE MOTHER AND FATHER
[THROUGH WHOM MY LIFE (and hence this work also)
MANIFESTED]

SHRINIWAS JANARDAN KASHALIKAR

MEANING OF CONCEPTUAL STRESS



Conceptual stress is not a separate entity. It is a part of over all process of stress. We can also call it intellectual stress. In modern life where the pace of change of life has become very fast, we are unable to understand the rapidly emerging new issues in life. Our conceptual framework gets shattered and we become helpless and miserable. This state of helplessness and misery and consequent deleterious effects on individual and social life, constitute conceptual stress and it has acquired menacing dimensions!

Morality, ethics, customs, traditions, conventions etc. i.e. guidelines of past in every sphere of life are being proved inadequate and also irrelevant.

To give a simple example, cancer phobia [excessive and unfounded fear of cancer] is nothing but a case of conceptual stress. Cancer phobia many times results from inappropriate view, feelings and actions [conceptual deficiency] about the phenomenon of cancer, its nature, its symptoms such as pain and its outcome.

What are the symptoms of cancer phobia?

A patient of cancer phobia always suspects that he/she has cancer, whenever he gets pain. If he/she gets repeated pain, in a particular organ then he/she starts suspecting cancer of that particular part! This leads to morbid fear, anxiety, worry, and sense of helplessness.

Conceptual stress involves defective or deficient perception, deficient ideas, inaccurate thoughts, disproportionate emotions, unreasonable instincts and unnatural physical needs, which are associated with abnormal electrophysiological interactions between various neurons in the brain.

The secretion of different neurotransmitters, secretion of hormones and metabolic activities are abnormal and involve deleterious effects on personal and social health.

Conceptual stress is minimal or absent if you are totally ignorant and adjusted to a self centered, petty, indifferent, reflexive, passive, and stereotyped life style like a lower animal.

Conceptual stress is maximum when your perspective assumes global dimension, your feelings reach out to the miseries of the millions and your thinking reaches out to the mysteries of millennia! Your conceptual stress magnifies when your heart starts bleeding for suffering in even the remotest part of the world and even to the suffering of animals! Your conceptual stress worsens when you actually start searching for solutions as you come across conflicting opinions. This stress gets further multiplied when you start coming close to the solutions and begin to encounter difficulty in expressing them. This becomes more disturbing when you see every one turning away from you and your solutions being proved ineffective, though not inaccurate! Since you are not proved wrong, you do not find valid reason also to abandon your views and work. You land in an agonizing question, "Why you are ineffective if you are accurate?". At this point the very foundation of your existence begins to shake and your existence almost gets uprooted! Then gradually if and when you begin to see increasing matching, agreement, or harmony between your life and the universe [which in most cases would constitute changes in the direction of global welfare] your conceptual stress begins to get relieved simultaneously as that of the others!

It is true that we manage to ignore some questions, and rightly so e.g. mathematical problems need not as a routine, bother a biologist. Similarly, problems in one's educational career are best dealt with in the text-books and guides of those subjects and or solved by the expert teachers in that particular field!

But there are issues which are a) unavoidable, b) are faced by most of us, c) affect our personal and family lives immensely and d) affect the well being of the society immensely and produce CONCEPTUAL OR INTELLECTUAL STRESS in almost every one!

NECESSITY TO WRITE THIS BOOK?

There are thousands of books in the market on personality development, making money, being effective, making friends, winning people and so on. There are thousands of books, which deal with psychology, philosophy, religion, ethics, yoga, meditation, prophets, saints and such topics. A lot of information on these subjects is available on electronic media and Internet also. In fact the explosion of information on such subjects is mind boggling. Further, the information technology, internet, email, fax, ISD, and other modalities of satellite transmission have taken this information to a large majority of people, who hitherto did not have the access to this information. But there are three reasons because of which I decided to write this book.

The first is that it is usually not possible to precisely find out what would guide accurately in conceptual stress. This is because, there are many views and most of them are apparently conflicting and confusing. Efforts to search for information and get answers to day to day problems prove either futile or in fact add to confusion and frustration and prove counterproductive.

The second reason is that majority of this information is characteristically restricted to superficial aspects of human life. Because it is superficial, it is incapable of improving the understanding of life. This hollow and impotent information therefore is devoid of the content and power to enable readers to live with inner growth, magnanimity, fulfillment, harmony and happiness. In fact it makes you miserable. It stimulates your desire to become rich, famous, powerful, etc. and creates a sense of perpetual and ever increasing demands. This gives a feeling of deficiency. As a result, discontent and jealousy grow. Glorification of ordinary people for commercial, political and other benefits, sugar coated implicit indoctrination of pettiness, misleading advertisements can and do create self-pity. There are advertisements, which implicitly drive

home a ridiculous message that you do not love your children because you do not give them a particular soap, or chocolate or something of that sort! There are other advertisements which proclaim albeit indirectly that you are clumsy if you do not wear a particular shirt, stupid if you do not smoke a particular cigarette or out of fashion if you do not drink a particular whisky! One can quote hundreds of examples of such surreptitiously brutal and criminal information, which humiliates you!

Another damaging impact of this information is that it gives an impression that sanity has no place in the future. Thus it can shake your faith in goodness and sanity! It can tear your senses apart and confuse you. It can shatter your faith in yourselves and destroy your hopes in any bright future for yourselves, or the society! As a result, it can force you into spending hours, days, weeks, months and even years after years in utter selfishness marked by rabid material pursuits and criminal activities or utter depression, bitterness and frustration, marked by suicidal activities.

The third reason is that everyone has conceptual stress to a greater or lesser extent and also frank or subconscious desire to manage it effectively. As I went on writing, it gave me immense satisfaction and vigor in spite of the fact that such writing involves total personal consumption. I am sure that it would rejuvenate you and help you to help yourself and also the others in need!

WHY SHOULD YOU READ THIS BOOK?

Even after reading the foregoing you still may have a question, “Why should we read this book?”. This question is quite appropriate. You may ask and quite justifiably so, even more questions such as the following. “Why should we not give preference to our business, service, domestic work, or things such as part time additional job, shares or anything that either earns or saves money for us? Why should we not opt for some wonderful things such as hiking, trekking, swimming, jogging, physical exercise etc, which are good for physical health? If there is extra time then why should we not get involved in some charity work? Lastly, if we have inclination for things such as music, socialization, good food, good company, good drinks, etc. which relax us, then why should not we indulge in them and become happy?”

The answer to these questions is simple. It is for you to decide whether to read this book with priority or not and in fact even whether to read it at all or not!

But think of issues such as education, child labor, charity, physical pain, fear of diseases, loneliness, fear and grief of death and so many such things. These are issues, which influence individual as well as social life. These are such issues that that neither can you ignore them, nor can you escape from them. Added to this is the fact that you do not have enough time and energy to solve them. They are the ones, which if not understood properly, can cause you conceptual stress. In view of the fact that they would go on nagging you through out, spoil your health and that of the family and society, you would definitely welcome if you are offered solutions for them. It is precisely such solutions that I have offered in this book for which you may want to read this book!

It so happened that I got involved in the issues, which are apparently unrelated to individual life [but actually are not], in addition to those in my personal and family life. Further, I could spend time, energy, money and

everything one could, to study them on priority basis. Hence I feel privileged to have got the solutions to my satisfaction, which now appear so simple! I feel ecstatic to offer them to you. I do not intend to entangle you in any complex, tedious, scholastic, boring and exasperating intellectual exercise, but directly offer the solutions. I am sure you will experience clarity, harmony, peace, love, romance, buoyancy and enthusiasm while reading this book! You would experience happiness of overcoming the instinctual suffocation, emotional turbulence, behavioral disharmony, intellectual confusion and inappropriateness and ineffectiveness of action in society.

This is my promise based on my first hand experience.

However, you may not believe in me at this juncture but there is no harm in verifying my statement; for which you have to read at least the next page!

IMPORTANCE OF MANAGING CONCEPTUAL STRESS EFFECTIVELY

The only way of effective stress management is to understand the nature, causes, dimensions, mechanisms, effects and principles of management of stress. Basically this involves improvement in cognition, affect and conation. In other words, this involves improvement in our views, our feelings and our actions. In my book, "STRESS, UNDERSTANDING AND MANAGEMENT, A WAY TO TOTAL WELL BEING", I have discussed these things.

But having studied the basics required in stress management one looks forward for greater efficiency.

For more effective management of stress, management of conceptual stress is essential and for that, further improvement in views, feelings and actions is essential. For this, it is imperative to study issues, such as those mentioned on page XII, which affect private as well as public life and especially those issues, which are pertinent to our fields.

Please remember, WITHOUT EVOLVING VIEWS, FEELINGS AND ACTIONS WITH RESPECT TO ISSUES IN INDIVIDUAL AS WELL AS SOCIAL LIFE, PERTINENT TO YOUR FIELD, STRESS IN GENERAL AND CONCEPTUAL STRESS IN PARTICULAR CAN NOT BE MANGED EFFECTIVELY.

I have discussed some issues in my previous book but in brief.

In this book we will consider such several issues of immediate relevance in day to day lives. I am sure this will pave a way for conceptual clarity and thereby more efficient stress management.

Unfortunately many of us try frantically to manage stress [and conceptual stress], without this understanding and as a result, create and perpetuate misery for themselves and the society. All short cuts marketed under the disguise

of stress management can at times be temporarily useful but ultimately prove useless and even counterproductive in personal and social life.

Now let us see why effective stress [and conceptual stress] management is essential.

Every one of us has stress. Thus a student may have stress of examination or competition and a doctor may have a stress of treating a difficult disease. A farmer may have stress of drought and a mill worker may have stress of lay off. A Prime Minister of a country may have stress of a crucial decision making such as nuclear testing, dealing with religious sentiments or flak from media etc.

It has to be appreciated that just as the causes of the stress vary, just in the same way the implications of the stress also vary. Thus the adverse effects of the ineffective management of stress in individual life as well social life vary. Thus the student may avoid appearing from examination, the doctor may shirk from his duty, the farmer may commit suicide and the mill worker rendered jobless may be forced into illegal underworld activities. The wrong decision of a Prime Minister may influence not only his life but also that of the generations after generations of one or more countries, in adverse ways.

This clearly illustrates that the adverse effects of stress are not restricted to one's own body and one's own family. The ineffective management of stress by political leaders, industrial leaders, union leaders, media leaders, religious leaders and in general people involved in decision making can adversely affect various walks of life and even the future generations directly or indirectly. This is comparable to most dangerous and rapidly spreading pandemic infectious disease. The patient suffering from such infectious disease, if does not undergo proper treatment, then he/she would harm himself/herself as well as the others.

Effective management of stress [and conceptual stress]

therefore, is vitally important for one's own well being and that of the society as well.

CONTENTS

Prayer

Dedication

Meaning of conceptual stress

Necessity to write this book

Why should you read this book?

Importance of managing conceptual stress effectively

SECTION-I

CONCEPTS RELATED TO HEALTHY LIVING

- 1 Concept of holistic health
- 2 Healthy aging
- 3 Concept of Good Morning
- 4 Concept of Observance of Silence [Mauna]
- 5 Concept of Drinking Water the Sap of Life
- 6 The Concept of Bath
- 7 Massage
- 8 The Concept of Walking
- 9 Concept of composed mind.

SECTION-II

CONCEPTS RELATED TO INDIVIDUAL LIFE

- 10 Concept of physical pain
- 11 How to overcome the shame of being non-normal?
- 12 How to overcome the fear and shame of disease?
- 13 How to reduce the unpleasantness of death?
- 14 How to overcome loneliness?
- 15 How can we overcome negative or depressive

thoughts?

- 16 How to overcome jealousy?
- 17 How to overcome frustration?
- 18 Why do we indulge in or refrain from things and repent later?

SECTION-III

CONCEPTS RELATED TO SOCIAL LIFE

- 19 How can we overcome the stress caused by conceptual chaos in the field of education?
- 20 Stress resulting from inadequate understanding of the consumer interest
- 21 How to manage the stress resulting from inadequate grasp of ever growing corruption?
- 22 Conceptual confusion about communalism
- 23 Employees-employer relations
- 24 Strikes in public hospitals in India
- 25 Concept Of Functioning of a Municipal Body

SECTION-IV

CONCEPTS OF ABSTRACT NATURE

- 26 Is it true that KARMAPHALASIDDHANTA, justifies injustice, exploitation and inequality?
- 27 Concepts of superstition, faith and rationality
- 28 Is it useful to find out the degree of pleasure or sadness?
- 29 We are taught to obey. But is it always correct to obey blindly?
- 30 Ideology
- 31 Non Violence
- 32 Concepts of charity and swadharma
- 33 What is satisfactory living?

- 34 Family life
- 35 Miracles
- 36 The Concept of Holistic Medicine
- 37 Practical utility of understanding the concept of death and immortality
- 38 Are there any other concepts, which give rise to the fear and unpleasantness of death?
- 39 It is said that the ultimate aim of human life is MOKSHA or LIBERATION from the cycle of birth and death. If this is true then how do we explain the reincarnation of Lord Vishnu? How can we explain the reincarnation re-incarnation of Krishna [He assures in Geeta that he reincarnates in every epoch]? Or even for that matter Dattatreya?
- 40 Understanding of first eight chapters of Geeta found useful in the management of conceptual stress.

SECTION I
CONCEPTS RELATED TO HEALTHY LIVING



CHAPTER 1

CONCEPT OF HOLISTIC HEALTH

Holistic health in adult human beings is nothing else but ongoing movement towards increasingly accurate perception, appropriate feelings and precise actions, with increasing pleasure, power, prosperity and profundity. Perception, feelings and actions are also expressed by terms Cognition, Affect and Conation respectively.

1] Cognition In short, cognition means processing [appraisal] of a huge variety of sensations impinging on us. You can appreciate the importance of this faculty if you consider the two important facts viz. 24 hours of the day and twelve months of the year, every one of us gets sensory inputs in the form of physical, instinctual, emotional and intellectual stimuli, which may be painful or pleasurable in the form of a variety of personal, familial, social, national and international events. Cognition involves sensing, interpreting, memorizing, questioning, pattern finding, analyzing, correlating, synthesizing, contemplating, understanding, appreciating and hypothesizing on the basis of this information input.

2] Affect Affect means the effect of the variety of stimuli which, may impinge on us. The affect is in a way, “sandwiched” between cognition or perception of stimuli

and the conation or response.

In general it involves the activity of various parts of nervous, endocrine and metabolic changes. The affect is usually experienced as a) confidence, enthusiasm, pleasure, happiness, love, attraction, patience, comfort etc. or b) sadness, jealousy, hatred, depression, inhibition, diffidence, loneliness, listlessness, impatience, discomfort etc.

3] Conation or action i.e. response Conation is the response of an individual. This can speaking, writing, listening, watching, and other interactions usually referred to as behavior.

In traditional parlance this was called fulfillment of four PURUSHARTHAs, viz. DHARMA, ARTHA, KAAMA and MOKSHA through practice of SWADHARMA. DHARMA refers to accuracy in perception, affect and conation. This leads to ARTHA i. e. acquisition of material gains, followed by KAAMA i.e. satisfaction of the mundane desires [DHARMA AVIRUDDHAH KAAMAH i. e. the desires which are not against the DHARMA i.e. principles of global welfare.]. KAAMA is followed by MOKASHA i.e. liberation from all sort of bonds.

In short it must be appreciated that for most of us holistic health refers to ever increasing and appropriate satisfaction of physical, instinctual, emotional, intellectual needs and fulfillment and happiness arising from it.



CHAPTER 2 HEALTHY AGING

1] INTRODUCTION

2] THEORIES OF AGEING

3] VARIOUS CHANGES THKING PLACE DURING AGEING PROCESS

4] HEALTHY AGEING

1] INTRODUCTION:

By the word ageing we generally think of an unpleasant process associated with dysfunction and disability. We think of a phenomenon full of dependence and helplessness. It seems to indicate only cumulative wear and tear due to micro insults and time dependent programmed loss of structure and function. It seems to imply physical, psychological, intellectual and social incapacitation. It seems to involve choking of charm, routing of romance, decay of dreams, annihilation of aspirations and end of new beginnings. It seems to be an entity that signals us to wind up every thing get ready to quit this world- the world that we are so much long to live in.

So let us study what is underlying this process of ageing. But before we do that we have to distinguish

it from the handicap or dysfunction that results from diseases and the changes resulting from diseases and the natural process of ageing, i.e. one which would take place in the absence of diseases.

One can appreciate that such distinction is quite difficult. Most of us suffer from one ailments such as infections, malignancies, diabetes, IHDs, as well as environmental onslaughts in the form of ultraviolet radiation, heat, cold, pollution, food additives, allergic substances, physical and chemical injuries etc..

But still the ageing that results in absence history of gross or major diseases roughly represents the true ageing and is generally attributed to two basic facts

A]. Genetic programme

Decides the range of the longevity of life for a specific species and determines genetic programme by virtue of which there time dependent loss in structure and function. Genes programme senescence and death. Fibroblasts show 40 to 60 doublings. Ovary, testis, breasts, uterus, thymus etc.

B]. Accumulation of injuries or micro insults

Since very little is understood in this respect there many theories based on these two tenets to explain the ageing. Since they focus on a specific change, they are inadequate. But together they do give us some insight into the process of ageing.

2] THEORIES OF AGEING:

A] The Error Catastrophe Theory

Random increase in errors of protein synthesis i.e. defects in transcription and translation. But these seem to be post translational modifications.

Further, in senescent cells accumulation of misspelled proteins is not found and Induction of synthesis of erroneous proteins experimentally does not give rise to

ageing.

B] Somatic mutation theory

This suggests that there is age associated increase in chromosomal aberration.

This is suggested to give rise progressive increase in inefficient cells leading to organ dysfunction.

C] Free radical theory

accumulation of metabolic waste products and radical mediated cell damage e.g. hydroxy peroxide, aldehydes and ketones, superoxide radical, singlet oxygen and hydrogen peroxide.

Lipid peroxidation at cellular level is not demonstrated in ageing.

And antioxidants are not as yet proved to be useful in delaying ageing.

D] Ionising radiations and such other environmental factors may cause cell injury.

E] Cellular dysfunction in tissues such as CNS, endocrine and immune system and influence other systems. Thus decrease in synthesis, increased breakdown, decrease in receptor number, decrease in H-R combination, decrease in HR internalisation etc.

F] Sedentary jobs, late night parties, noise, crowding, stress of highly competitive life, uncertainty of socio-political surroundings, consistent and protracted denial of the recognition and appreciation in life, habits such as excessive smoking, lack of enjoyable job, lack of promotions and incentives in jobs etc. can definitely contribute to hastening of the process of ageing. These factors are somehow either not thought of or are not given due importance and hence not mentioned the text books.

3] VARIOUS CHANGES TAKING PLACE DURING AGEING PROCESS:

Overall changes in the body are decrease in the height, increase in the length of nose, increase in the length of ears, decrease in the circumference of neck, decrease in the circumference of thighs, osteoporosis, bending of the vertebral column causing kyphotic deformity, reduction in the periorbital fat causing sinking of the eyes etc.

A] Physiological Changes

Broadly speaking, maximum capacity, tolerance, peak performance and reserve are reduced.

i] Matrix

Collagen becomes stable, more rigid, more insoluble and also reduction in its content and increase in its degradation. In addition there are changes in proteoglycans and plasma proteins. This is due to damage due cross linking, less formation of collagen, reduction in the elastin. Fascia, tendons, ligaments, bones, joints, and peripheral vascular disease become rigid. Skin becomes dehydrated, devoid of subcutaneous fat and less elastic thus skin becomes wrinkled, dry, pale due to reduction in capillary bed, more susceptible to injury.

ii] Blood

Red bone marrow is replaced by yellow bone marrow in the long bones first, flat bones and then vertebrae. Physiological reserve capacity for erythropoiesis and leucopoiesis is reduced.

iii] Gastrointestinal tract

Teeth : Enamel, dentin and cement all show decline. Loss of teeth due to caries, periodontal infection and reduced masticatory efficiency.

Weakness of cricopharyngeus, reduction in pressure gradient and inability to relax the lower esophageal sphincter cause dysphagia.

Stomach : Age related atrophy of mucosa causing achlorhydria. Pancreatic lipase reduced causing steatorrhoea.

Motility of GIT is reduced : Hence there is tendency towards constipation. In Ayurveda this is categorised under VAATA VRIDDHI.

Intestinal lactase activity is reduced and villi are reduced and absorption is reduced. Liver cells reduce in number fibrous tissue increases and size of liver cells increases.

Protein synthesis and microsomal mixed oxidase activity required for metabolism of drugs and steroids become less. Thus functions are reduced but since the reserve is great the tests are in normal limit.

iv] The immune system

shows decrease in the T cell activity, decrease in AB production and presence of auto anti bodies due to reduced tolerance to antigens formerly recognised as self. There is susceptibility to infections. Since immunological -surveillance is believed to eliminate neoplastic cells there is higher incidence of cancer. Following stress of bereavement there is steep decline in cell mediated immunity and this causes death following death of spouse or any other near / dear one.

v] Reproductive system

The hormonal secretion reduces and there is stoppage of ova formation, ovulation in females and there is gradual reduction in the spermatogenesis causing reduction in the sperm count.

Females show a distinct and identifiable change in the form of menopause where has such change is not distinct in males.

vi] Central nervous system and special senses

Atrophy of the brain and neuronal loss. Accumulation of lipofuscin and loss of synapses and dendrites. Cholinergic deficit is demonstrated in Alzheimer's disease and Dopamine defect is demonstrated in Parkinson's disease. Milder form of cholinergic deficit may be responsible for commoner forms of senile dementia and milder form dopaminergic deficit may be responsible for milder form of hypokinesia seen in old age.

There is deficit in autonomic responses leading to postural hypo-tension and impairment of temperature regulation

Decrease in sleep : There is difficulty in getting sleep as well as there is tendency to wake up during night and waking up early. Presbyopia, cataract, rise in intraocular pressure.

Presbycusis i.e. difficulty in hearing causes difficulty in understanding speech and localisation of sound.

Sense of smell and taste also decline with age but are not studied adequately perhaps because they do not cause serious functional deficits.

vii] Endocrine system

There is decrease in sympathoadrenal axis and there is reduced tolerance to stress.

viii] Cardiovascular system

In those where there is no atherosclerosis, there still reduction in elasticity of aorta. Increase in systolic and pulse pressure. But no change in diastolic pressure.

Atherosclerosis, Atrophy of myocardium, Accumulation of lipofuscin, Fibrosis, Deposits of amyloid, Contractility of heart is diminished, contraction and relaxation time are increased, Decrease in ventricular compliance, stenosis of aortic and incompetence of mitral valves, Number of pacemaker cells is reduced and so, responses to sympathetic as well as parasympathetic stimulation reduce and this causes postural hypotension.

Maximal HR during exercise is reduced in aged but cardiac output is maintained by increasing stroke output.

ix] Respiratory System

Microscopic changes

The alveoli become flatter and narrower and ducts enlarge. Walls of the alveoli become thin, capillaries decrease in number. Alveolar surface area decreases by 4 % every decade after the age of 30. Pulmonary blood vessels show age related increase in wall thickness.

Functionally there is decrease in total and timed vital capacity. Increase in residual volume. Due to reduced elastin lung compliance increases but compliance of the total respiratory system decreases due rigidity of chest wall after the age of 60 years.

Due to loss of elastic recoil the pressure which has to be built during expiration from the alveoli so that air from alveoli forces open the airways, is decreased. Due to this there is tendency of the airways to collapse. This tendency to collapse increases during expiration when expiration must become active.

Due to decrease in capillaries there is reduction in diffusion. The response to hypoxia and hypocapnia are reduced.

Thus ventilation, diffusion and regulation are all impaired in elderly individuals.

x] Muscles

Atrophy, reduction in contractility, decrease in tone, cataract, hernia and rupture of inter-vertebral disc etc.

xi] Excretory system

Kidneys reduce in size, renal plasma flow and GFR reduces 10 % per decade after 30, nephrons and their secretory and absorptive functions reduce and fibrous tissue increases.

Kidney vessels show age related changes irrespective of hypertension.

It has been hypothesised that due to high protein diet there may high solute load on the renal capillaries leading to chronic dialation of the capillaries leading to extravasation macromolecules in renal glomeruli leading to mesangial reaction causing renal damage.

B] Psychological Changes

Frustration, depression, fear, anxiety, insecurity, loneliness, vacuum, dejection, self pity, sadness are some of the hallmarks of old age.

With ageing there is increasing restriction on the kind of enjoyments one is accustomed to and this can lead to frustration or depression.

The increasing chances of death especially due death of the contemporaries cause alarm, concern, anxiety and fear of death, diseases and debility.

Due to lack of job after retirement or physical inability there is always a sense of insecurity.

Lack of the children's company due to their being increasingly independent gives a feeling of loneliness. This can happen due to children going abroad or away from home for their jobs.

Since most of the people of younger age groups have their own pre-occupations the elderly are left out. More over the ideas, choice, preferences and other areas of interests differ and hence the elderly are cut off from younger generation. This distance gradually increases with advancing age.

This leads to vacuum, dejection, self pity and sadness. Thus overall the old people tend to become increasingly melancholic.

C] Economic Changes

The ageing almost always associated with reduced

income and increasing economic dependence on the others.

D] Spiritual Changes

In India we find that there is an increasing tendency to visit temples and SATSANG. This is because they want a certain kind of solace which they do not get from day to day life and routine activities. This is also to fill the vacuum created due to retirement, and get company of those who sail in the same boat.

This has given to a widely prevalent yet totally wrong notion that the spiritual pursuit should be undertaken at old age.

But the courage, alertness, enthusiasm and other physical and mental faculties which are extremely important to undertake spiritual pursuit [i.e. growth of consciousness] considerably diminish in old age.

Old people become some what disinterested and indifferent towards life. But this should not be taken as detached attitude described in Geeta. Old people are generally detached because they accept that they cannot do anything to either prevent things which they do not like, or to make things happen which they like. Thus their detachment is out of giving up, or acceptance of defeat.

Some elderly individuals develop ascetic thoughts due to losing interest in the routine life because they are tired of responsibilities and dynamism required for their job or profession. This may mean reduction in income. But this has not do with financial sacrifice. It is only a fallout of exhaustion.

It is not a spiritual virtue of selflessness.

Some individuals lose interest in the surroundings due to decreasing sensory perception and decreased mobility. They become shy about their deficiency. So they avoid socialisation. Gradually they become increasingly self centred and selfish. They become over-concerned about

themselves and less sensitive to others' problems. They become more rigid, adamant and at times obstinate. In an attempt to assert themselves they become unreasonable and erratic.

Spiritual bankruptcy and lowliness are the worst aspects of ageing

But this impression which we get from the foregoing is quite inadequate and therefore wrong. Further it is dangerously pessimistic and depressing. The horror of ageing, as made out to be by merely observing certain physical or psychological changes without realising that there is a vast difference between the ageing of the animals and that of the human beings, only creates fear about ageing. Thereby instead of helping the aged we expedite the process of ageing and its ill effects not only in the elderly but also in the younger minds by creating fear psychosis. We may call it gerontophobia, or gerontoneurosis.

The meaning of the word ageing is not merely becoming old but also developing and maturing. Hence ageing of wine raises its market value!

The depressing notion about ageing fails to notice the fact that while ageing, a person accumulates not merely micro insults and injuries but simultaneously accumulates a variety of experiences, associated with increasingly appropriate and accurate interpretation of those experiences and increasingly accurate responses to challenges in life.

Ageing is also associated with either greater and greater degree of fulfilment, satisfaction, and contentment due to achievements in life, success in the aims / ambitions / aspirations. In the lesser fortunate ones it is associated with happiness of having procreated and seen children and grand children grow. It is associated with experience of their love. Even in the least fortunate ones it incorporates the satisfaction that one has lived [has not died young].

Further it has been realised that while ageing the aged

individual gradually learns the inevitable nature of ageing and death and hence gradually learns to accept them uncomplainingly and gracefully.

Age is respected in Indian culture as against some cultures in other parts of the world where the age and aged are treated as liabilities. Thus age brings extra care and respect to the individual. He gets more services and comforts in preference to the younger lot. Though this scenario is changing, it is still not out of control.

However, after having seen that ageing need not be dreaded at all it is NOT ONLY NOT impertinent and unnecessary to study the process of ageing BUT INFACT is VERY essential to study it in a holistic manner i.e. from every possible angle and as a part of our existence. Because this can help us overcome our fear of old age, it can help us age gracefully and it can also help us to help the aged people. This can help us in helping the aged to help themselves also. This can improve the quality of everyone's life aged as well as to be aged.



CHAPTER 3

CONCEPT OF GOOD MORNING

According to some, the time from 2.30 a.m. to the sunrise and according to some, the period of two hours before the sunrise constitute BRAHMAMUHURTA. As the name suggests this time is the best time for conceiving, understanding, experiencing or merging with BRAHMA, the eternal truth, the eternal purity and the eternal bliss. This is the time of liberation from the shackles of every kind. It is not a matter of belief for those who have experienced the joy of getting up fresh from the bed at this time!

There is a Sanskrit shloka [verse], which depicts the subclassification of this enchanting period.

PANCHA, PANCHA USHAHKAALA

SAPTAPANCHAARUNODAYA

ASHTAPANCHA BHAVET PRAATAH SHESHA

SURYODAYO MATAH

It means:

55 GHATIKA after the sunrise of previous day the USHAH KAALA the time of USHAA begins.

After 57 GHATIKA, the time of ARUNODAYA and after 58 GHATIKA the time of PRAATAH begins. The remaining time till sunrise is called the time of SURYODAYA. [The day is constituted of 60 GHATIKA. GHATIKA is approximately equivalent to 24 minutes.]

It is with the grace of mother earth that this fortune is granted to us. We walk on her body in a mindless manner through out the day. So there is a tradition to be grateful to her before we start our day by praying the mother earth. This wisdom helps us unite with the forces of which we are extension and thereby empower ourselves and also be humble and environment-friendly.

SAMUDRAVASANE DEVI
PARVATASTANAMANDALE
VISHNUPATNIM NAMASTUBHYAM
PADASPARSHAM KSHAMASVA ME

Oh goddess earth, who is clad in the beautiful attire of oceans and the mountains are whose bosoms and who is the wife of Lord Vishnu, I offer my grateful salutations to you and ask for forgiveness as I put my feet on you [touch you with my feet].

This prayer orients us appropriately in such way that it opens up our hearts to the glorious bounties of earth and her love towards us. It starts nourishing us as well as gives us the perspective of loving our mother earth, which is so much essential for awakening our responsibilities towards her.

Then we pray

KARAGRE VASATE LAXMI KA
RAMADHYE SARASVATI
KARAMULE TU GOVINDAM
PRABHATE KARADARSHANAM

The meaning is

At the tips of the hand there stays Laxmi the goddess of prosperity

At the middle stays the goddess of knowledge Sarasvati.

At the root of the hands stays Lord Govinda i.e. Lord Vishnu Hence [I] always watch my hands with reverence!

This is such a wonderful prayer! It helps us to reveal and establish the connections between the deities, which are the sources of our power. It helps us explore the potentials of prosperity, profundity and fulfillment in our life and thereby helps us develop respect for ourselves. Such respect as you know, is essential for taking due care of our body while simultaneously directing it to do things in life which would help us in gaining holistic health.

There is one more and simple prayer in SHUKLA YAJURVEDA. It is as follows.

BAHU ME BALAMINDRIYAM

HASTAU KARMA VEERYAM

AATMA KSHATRAMURO BHAVA

I pray that my arms and my all organs be strong and my soul and my heart be the healers.

SHUKLA YAJURVEDA 20.7.



CHAPTER 4

CONCEPT OF OBSERVENCE OF SILENCE [MAUNA]

It is interesting to see how speech reflects the mind of a person and in turn how regulation of the process of speech has beneficial influence on mind!

One of the shlokas says,

PAPENAIVA NRUNAANAM VAANEE BHAVET
KATUKABHASHINEEDAINYA MAATSARYA
PARAMAA SHUBHAASHUBHAVIVARJITA

Meaning

It is because of diseased mind with utmost lowliness and jealousy that the speech becomes scalding with no concern whatsoever for about the welfare or otherwise of the listener.

In Geeta it is said,

ANUDVEGAKARAM VAAKYAM
SAYAM PRIYA HITAN CHA YAT

SVAADHYAAYAABHYASAN CHAIVA

VANGMAYM TAPA UCCHYATE

-GEETA 17.15

Meaning:

Speech which does not humiliate and thereby hurt [the listener], thus which is true and pleasant and beneficial is really the product of penance involving the entire neuro-physiological and neuromuscular processes of speech and articulation respectively.

There is another shloka which advocates silence during certain physiological acts. It is as follows.

UTSARGE MAITHUNE CHAIVA PRASTRAVE

DANTADHAAVNESHRAADDHE BHOJANAKALE

CHA SHATSU MAUNAM SAMAACHARET

Meaning:

During defecation, urination, removal of secretions of nose, skin, ear and eyes [dirt], during bleeding, during sexual intercourse, cleaning of teeth, during SHRAADDHA [ritual performed to commemorate the death anniversary of an individual] and while eating food one should observe silence i. e. speechlessness.

During defecation usually there is breath holding and contraction of abdominal muscles. This is essential for building adequate pressure in the abdomen so as to move the feces towards anus. Due to talking the breath holding ceases and the abdominal muscles also relax. This would create difficulty in smooth defecation. One can also consider the distraction [due to talking], which can be disturbing to defecation.

Urination also involves increase in pressure in the abdomen and also in the urinary bladder. Talking can alter these pressures and hence the urinary flow can be disturbed.

When we are removing the secretions from nose [respiratory secretions], skin, ears and eyes we should be careful to remove the dirt carefully so as to avoid trauma to these structures

In general, all the excretory processes, viz. defecation, urination, respiratory secretions, sweating, secretions in the ear and eye involve autonomic nervous activity linked with reticular formation in the brain. Talking can alter respiration, activity of reticular formation, and activity of mind, autonomic nervous activity, endocrine and metabolic activity and also the excretory activity.

Sexual intercourse invariably involves autonomic activity and hence it is strongly recommended that silence is observed during sexual intercourse. It is important because the intensity of the emotional integration and depth of ecstasy are apparently hindered due to talking during sexual intercourse.

Bleeding can either be physiological bleeding as in case of menstrual bleeding and it can also be due trauma [injury]. The process of bleeding and arrest of bleeding are tremendously influenced by cardiovascular activity, which in turn is influenced by autonomic nervous activity. Hence talking that disturbs autonomic activity is recommended to be avoided.

During cleaning of the teeth there is a prayerful attitude with respect to the plants or herbs used in the process. So talking is avoided. But from practical point of view, talking during cleaning of teeth and gums can cause inadvertent biting of fingers or injury to the oral cavity. During SHRAADDHA silence is probably advised solely for maintaining pious atmosphere, which is understandable.

During eating the silence advised to avoid vulgar and even mundane thoughts being articulated [thereby hindering the sanctity of the eating] on the one hand and to avoid accidental regurgitation of food in the trachea on

the other.

It can be seen how thoughtful were our ancestors with respect to understanding of life. It has to be appreciated these are relatively superficial aspects of keeping silence.

Learning to keep silence in terms of avoiding talk is a very preliminary process of achieving real silence. It is the achievement of this silence, which is called KARMANI AKARMA in Geeta [4.18]. This is full of peace and full of activity. It is very real and deepest personal experience and also the cosmic phenomenon that links one with the universe.

MANAHPRASAADAH SAAUMYATVAM
MAAUNAM AATMAVINIGRAH
BHAAVASAUNSHUDDHIRITYETAT TAPO
MAANASAMUCCHYATE

-GEETA 17.16

Inner harmony associated with vocal silence that emanates life-giving joy are indicators of pure existence and referred to as MANASAM TAPA.

If we keep quiet for sometime, then we can easily observe the turbulence of thoughts, which keep on crowding our minds. This observation tells us that the thoughts are neither our creation nor are restricted to our body. They are the link, between, the cosmos and us and illustrate the continuity between an individual and the universe.

Keeping silence has a humorous and practical implication also.

AATMANO MUKHADOSHENA
BADHYANTE SHUKA SAARIKA
BAKASTATRA NA BDHYANTE MAUNAM
SARVAARTHA SAADHANAM

Meaning:

It is because inappropriate [too long, too harsh, stupid, meaningless, too enticing] speech is a cause of slavery, imprisonment or other type of losses. Ability to remain silent is extremely beneficial. This is clear from the examples of SAARIKA and parrot who are caught and kept in cage whereas crane is free! Hence while negotiating in business or in politics or even playing cards, silence can play a pivotal role!



CHAPTER 5

CONCEPT OF DRINKING WATER THE SAP OF LIFE

We must know that 66 % of the body weight is constituted by water.

Out of this about 66 % i. e. about 28 liters is in the cells called intracellular fluid and about 34 % i. e. about 14 liters is outside the cells called extracellular fluid. The water is so much important for the body but what alas, its importance is hardly described in textbooks of physiology or even preventive or curative medicine.

Right in the beginning it must be appreciated that water is essential for the saliva to form and give amongst other things, us the ability to taste. Formation of saliva would be tremendously compromised if there is inadequate availability of water. It is common experience that drying of mouth is associated with sensation of thirst as well

as speechlessness, besides developing bad odor to breath [halitosis], oral infections and caries of teeth..

Water is also required for the formation of gastric, pancreatic, intestinal and bile juices. Water is required amongst other things for temperature regulation through formation of sweat.

It is by getting dissolved in water, that the nutrients can reach different parts of body. It is the water that various chemical reactions take place so as to generate energy and also to build different body tissues, from the nutrients consumed. The water is also required for dissolving and carrying away the waste material from the body cells.

Water is very much required for removal of waste products through the rectum and urinary bladder.

The dry feces can be extremely painful and harmful and dry urine [oliguria, anuria] can be fatal. This probably does not require further elaboration as most of us have experienced the burning micturition and dry feces during fever and/or due even mild deficiency of water due to one reason or another. But in addition water is also required for removal of toxic gases like CO₂ by forming [CO₂ + H₂O = H₂CO₃ = HCO₃⁻ + H⁺] NaHCO₃. In fact, it is required for dissolving, neutralizing and detoxifying several substances from all the body cells as well as specialized cells like those of liver. It is worth noting that some individuals develop allergy to some substances including some drugs. In such situation, drinking large quantities of water is found to be beneficial.

It is also important to note that many of those who get dehydration and head ache can get relief by drinking lot of water. This is because of lot of water is consumed for metabolism of alcohol leaving the body dehydrated.

It is interesting to note that the gastrointestinal tract is nothing else but the internalized skin! It is therefore natural that this tract has lot of sensory receptors in as much as it has various glands and muscles. Therefore apart from everything else, mentioned above, the first thing

that happens after we drink water is that we feel fresh! Secondly it cleans various secretions of no consequence or those with injurious effects. Thirdly it would also stimulate movements of the stomach, intestine, small intestine etc. as a result of which there is facilitation of movement of feces towards the anus. This helps in relieving constipation. This is like internal bath.

Drinking of water can be beneficially used for many of those who wish to control habits such as tea, coffee or tobacco, alcohol etc. Since water has the paramount quenching effect it does allay the anxiety and restlessness which is developed because of abstinence of these substances and helps overcome these habits [though other measures may also be required depending on the severity of an individual case].

Some people viz. the advocates of “water therapy” advise as much 1.260 liters of water to be drunk at a time. They claim that a variety of diseases, are actually prevented and cured by such water drinking

In view of all the above, the custom of drinking water in morning called USHAHPANAM. [Actually this a general and nonspecific term. Ushaa means the time before the sunrise and paanam means to drink.] is very beneficial.

Water is life giving. Hence water itself is called life [JEEVANA]. It is very interesting to note that in India there is a custom of offering jaggery and water to the visitors. Water is served right in the beginning even in restaurants.



CHAPTER 6

THE CONCEPT OF BATH

The concept of bath is more profound than is usually considered to be. The bath is neither a mechanical and meaningless religious ritual nor it is a physical procedure that merely involves cleaning the body and simply refreshing the mind.

It has to be appreciated that bath has direct influence on the activities of all the cells of the body through its effects on central nervous system, autonomic nervous system, endocrine system, immune system and metabolic activities. It is true that the details of the effects are not described in the text- books of physiology as they have are not studied or even thought over adequately. In addition, there is a tendency amongst researchers to rely on experiments and not accept [or even consider] what appeals to reasoning unless substantiated by experiments, ven if it is obvious. This is somewhat similar to increasing

reliance of clinicians on gadgets and investigations. This has prevented us from understanding and appreciating the benefits of bath described in the following shloka.

GUNA DASHAH SNANAPARASYA SADHO
ROOPAM CHA TEJAM CHA BALAM CHA SHAUCHAM
AYUSHYAM AROGYAM ALOLUPATVAM
DUHSWAPNA GHATAHSH CHA TAPAM CHA MEDHA
The meaning is

Oh gentleman! The bath is beneficial in ten different ways.

It improves physical state of existence. It is to be appreciated that ROOPAM does not mean mere appearance. It includes all the physiology. This is why ROOPAM and NAMA are some times compared and contrasted. ROOPAM is everything that is identified by all the terminology [NAMA] in the physiology.

It improves the TEJAM i.e. all the activities that generate energy. In modern parlance this refers to formation of ATP [Adenosine Triphosphate] and CP [Creatine Phosphate]. It improves BALAM. BALAM refers to the actual power, endurance and working capacity of an individual [through efficient formation ATP and CP].

It imparts SHAUCHAM i.e. purity. SHAUCHAM is not merely physical cleanliness of the skin. Bath stimulates the circulation and helps wash away all the waste products likely to be accumulated in and around the cells present in nook and corner of the body.

It gives AYUSHYAM i.e. life. AYUSHYAM is defined as PRAANALAKSHANA VAAYUNAA YOGAH, which means availability and utilization of oxygenation by all the parts of the body. This is achieved through stimulation of central and autonomic nervous systems as well as through their stimulation, stimulation of the respiratory system, cardiovascular system, which are vital in reaching the oxygen to the body cells. But that is not all. It also stimulates the endocrine, immune and metabolic

activities.

It improves AROGYAM, which is defined as DHAATUSAAMYAM, which means right proportion of everything in body so as to give power, pleasure, profundity, peace and so on for prolonged time!

It gives ALOLUPATVAM, which means capacity rise above gravitating, enslaving, depressing, and frustrating forces in life. This is important in every sphere of life. In fact ALOLUPATVAM refers to the state of mind which is invincible.

DUSVAPNAGHAATASH means one, which destroys bad dreams or nightmares. Bath can achieve this through achieving a state of alertness by overcoming the unsteady, imbalanced state of mind, which causes bad dreams and nightmares.

TAPAH is of three types [Geeta 17.14, 17.15, 17.16] involving roughly speaking body, intellect and emotions. The TAPAH is also further classified [Geeta 17.17, 17.18, 17.19] into divine, mundane, and devilish. TAPAH means coordinated and controlled activity at an individual level, in the best interest of the universe, which is made easier through bath. Bath taken thrice a day [TRIKAL SNAANA] in itself, is a difficult accomplishment and involves all three types of TAPAH!

MEDHAA means enlightened intelligence. The bath involves not only physical cleanliness but it shifts the level of consciousness. This is particularly important because with such shift in consciousness, the perceptions, desires, aims and actions become increasingly more accurate.

Prayer of Ganga

NAMAAMI GANGE TAVA PAADPANKAJAM
SURAASURAIRVANDITADIVYARUPAM
BHUKTIN CHA MUKTIN CHA DADAASI NITYAM
BHAAVAANUSAARENA SADAA NARAANAAM

This prayer when recited before actual SNAANA, helps in more than one way. It links us with the river Ganga

[who has been orshipped by our ancestors], thereby it links us with the land and our culture and it links us with our history and our forefathers. This very prayer has thus tremendous potential to help us get rid of isolated, alienated, lonely existence.

The diabetics may try bathing thrice a day and verify the beneficial effect of bath. Like bath cleaning of mouth after getting up in morning is also probably universal in nature. In India it is called MUKHA MAARJANAM [MUKHA means mouth and MAARJANAM means cleaning. Another term used is DANTADHAVANA. DANTA means teeth and DHAVANA means to purify. It is usual to clean nose, eyes, ears and whole face along with mouth and teeth.

In modern dentistry it is advised that the teeth be brushed at bedtime. This is in view of preventing accumulation of food particles trapped in dental crevices. There is nothing wrong about it. But some of us tend to think that brushing teeth in morning is not necessary, since nothing is trapped in the teeth as nothing is eaten during sleep!

This is due to the misconception that this is merely a cleansing [shaucha] procedure. Actually the use of the tooth powder as is traditional in India involves rubbing tongue, gums and palate and is useful in terms of causing stimulation of salivation and circulation in the areas surrounding the mouth [especially] in and around the maxillary and ethmoid sinuses. In addition this procedure stimulates the pertinent areas of brain and hence refreshes the mind.

Alternatively a stick of about nine inches of a banyan or a neem tree, by biting it at one side is used.

The following prayer is recited before or while cleaning the oral cavity, gums, tongue and the teeth.

AYURBALAM YASHO VARCHAS PRAJA
PASHUNVASUNI CHA
BRAHMA PRADNYAN CHA MEDHA CHA TVAM
NO DEHI VANASPATE



CHAPTER 7 MASSAGE

Massage is MARDANAM.

SNEHASCHA DHATUN SANSHUSHKAN
PUSHNATYASHU PRAYOJITAH
BALAMAGNIBALAM PUSHTIM
PRNASCHASYABHIVARDHAYET

The dry DHATUS [weakened body matter] becomes stronger if oiled and massaged. Even the AGNIBALAM [i.e. fire principle in body i.e. the metabolic activity] is rejuvenated and the PRNAS [i.e. peripheral, autonomic and central nervous and neuromuscular activity] is also strengthened.

VYAYAMASVINNAGATRASYA
PADBHYAMUDVARTITASYA CHA
VYADHAYO NOPASARPANTI SIMHAM
KSHUDRAMRUGA IVA

BHARATIYA SANSKIRI KOSHA VOL.7, pages 90-91.

One whose body has perspired because of exercise and

massaged by feet becomes so strong that just as timid deer do not come even nearby a lion, similarly the diseases do not come even in the vicinity of him/her.

There are different types of massage which improve circulation in almost every nook and corner of your body. In the evenings the head massage is especially useful. You can do it yourself. You can use Brahmi oil and get the additional advantage. Massage eyes, face etc. Once in week whole body massage can do wonders to your health. You can use Narayan oil for additional benefit. It is useful to massage the feet twice or thrice a week. The best time to massage the feet in the evenings. Feet take all the burden of the body. But they are not enough attention. Callosities, corns, scaling, fungal infections, bruises are common on feet. This is especially so in case of those who do a job where standing for long time or walking is required. Ill fitting shoes, allergies to synthetic shoes are also common problems. They keep an individual nagging and disturb one's peace of mind. Regular massaging ensures flexibility of the small joints and adequate circulation and microcirculation in the feet. This is especially useful in diabetics who are more to develop vasculopathy and resultant damage in the feet, in the form of necrosis and gangrene. Massage when given with love and care can be far more soothing and healing than when given by a professional [who may be indifferent

WHAT IS IMPORTANCE OF MASSAGE?

Massage is very useful. I have discussed it here because it has an inseparable element of emotional soothing.

There are different types of massage. All of them help you to improve circulation in almost every nook and corner of your body.

In the evenings the head massage is especially useful. You can do it yourself. You can use Brahmi oil and get the additional advantage.

Massage eyes, face etc.

As far as body massage is concerned, it may not be

feasible to take it every day. But at least once in week whole body massage can do wonders to your health. You can use Narayan oil for additional benefit.

IS IT USEFUL TO HAVE FOOT MASSAGE?

Yes. It is useful to massage the feet twice or thrice a week. The best time to massage the feet in the evenings. Feet take all the burden of the body. But they are not enough attention. Callosities, corns, scaling, fungal infections, bruises are common on feet. This is especially so in case of those who do a job where standing for long time or walking is required. Ill fitting shoes, allergies to synthetic shoes are also common problems. They keep an individual nagging and disturb one's peace of mind.

Regular massaging ensures flexibility of the small joints and adequate circulation and micro-circulation in the feet. This is especially useful in diabetics who are more to develop vasculopathy and resultant damage in the feet, in the form of necrosis and gangrene..

Massage when given with love and care can be far more soothing and healing than when given by a professional [who may be indifferent].



CHAPTER 8

THE CONEPT OF WALKING

According to Mahatma Gandhi walking is the best exercise.

Locomotion is a characteristic of most species. But in human beings this characteristic has almost disappeared and is replaced by mechanization, mechanized motion, automation and automated motion! Most of the time we are sitting in chairs and our legs are idle, neither supporting nor balancing our body. They either hang from the chairs passively or are resting on the footrest under the table.

This sedentary life style has led to either development or aggravation of several ailments. It is not necessary to go into the details of these ailments. But some of them such ischaemic heart diseases, diabetes mellitus, varicose veins, hernia, low body resistance are obvious.

Walking is being one with one's biological specie identity. Just as locomotion is natural as well as essential for the survival in case of most animals and birds, it is natural and though not essential for survival, in view of

availability of sex, food, protection etc. without locomotion, essential for the health.

Walking involves synchronous activation and inhibition of general sensory and general motor neurons in the nervous system and thereby also a variety of muscle groups. This has two major effects. The prefrontal cortex and limbic system involved in activity of intellect and emotions and characterized by reverberating circuits associated with confusion, dilemmas, diffidence, inertia, indecision, anxiety etc are kept in abeyance.

Hence walking alleviates the anxiety. Walking is solacing because of its synchronizing influence on the brain and mind. In addition it has the same beneficial effect of exercise, of producing endorphins and cooling the mind. Walking is associated with contraction of the lower extremities, which help in returning of the blood from the lower parts to the heart. This prevents development of varicose veins and reduces load on the heart. Since pumping activity of the heart is reduced the possibility of heart failure is reduced.

As a byproduct of improved venous return, the lungs are perfused better and ventilation is not wasted or in other words, oxygenation is improved.

Walking is associated with, associated movement of arms and neck and hence the possibility of degenerative changes in these regions causing spondylosis and frozen shoulder are reduced.

Gradual and supported walking helps the patients of parkinsonism, paraplegia, hemiplegia etc gain confidence [which is vital for early recovery].

Even the senior citizens are benefited in terms of being able to assert their physical stamina.

Walking is useful as form meditation called GAMANA [walking] VIPASYANA [meditation]. Those who like to recite the name of God [NAMSMARAN] or those like to recite prayers can do so while walking.

By practice, is possible synchronizing NAMSMARAN,

with footsteps, which are synchronous inhalation and exhalation and the relaxation and contraction of abdominal muscles.

Walking reduces the stress produced because of immobility. This is especially true in cities where we have to spend in our life in “matchbox prisons”. The stress caused by such immobility is proved to cause a variety of damaging i. e. injurious effects on the body.

Walking gives us opportunity to breathe at least some fresh air which so rare in cities like Mumbai, Calcutta, Delhi etc.

While walking we get breeze which is important from the VIHAR point of view in ayurveda and giving the body air element from the point of view of naturopathy. In fact, walking provides, TEJA [sun], VAYU [air] and AKASH [space] and thus fulfilling naturopathic requirements excepting mud and water.

It is true from allopathic point of view that air, sun and space [by providing contrast] stimulate millions of receptors on the skin and also inside the body [as circulation increases] and cause overall rejuvenation of the nervous system and thereby other systems including circulatory and respiratory systems.

Like any other exercise is associated with increase in circulation, respiration, sweating and excretion of toxins and thus it helps the kidney by reducing load over it.

Walking is important for healthy sweating. Sweat is antiseptic and protects the skin from bacteria. In addition sweat actually washes away the obnoxious collections on the skin also. Sweating is important in thermo-regulation.

Because of increased blood supply to skin healing/ prevention of chronic skin ulcers and increased blood supply to mucus membranes and stimulation of the production of mucus cleaning the lungs and prevention/ healing of ulcers in the stomach can also be helped.

Besides, skin converts the bilirubin into lumirubin,

which is excreted in sweat. This is important additional/ alternative way of excretion of bilirubin.

Reduces blood sugar, cholesterol, triglycerides etc, as like exercise, it also stimulates metabolic [anabolic activity]. Walking in morning gives exposure to sun and this is good for natural supplement of vitamin D from the UV rays in the sunlight.

Regular walking gives us rest and freedom from many compulsions, which we impose on ourselves.

Walking almost certainly ensures sound sleep, which is one of the important aspects of health.

If we are walking alone and recite either some MANTRA or the name of God, then as we are not talking mundane matters we can gain most virtuous fruit of Maunam i.e. observance of silence. This is called MANAS TAPA in Geeta [17.16.]. This also helps in avoiding backbiting, abusing etc. and thereby help in purifying one's speech.

This is called VAACHAA SHUDDHI. Actually this helps in purifying the thoughts also.

From social point of view, deep and selfless bonds of love are developed amongst walkers.

Walking alone [without company] gives confidence and fearlessness by helping overcome the fears developed as result of paranoia found in many of us developed as a result of some physical or psychological trauma.

Not merely the medical problems are reduced and the safety is increased, but medical bills are also reduced. In addition obesity related food, [overeating], clothes [excess size] and perfumes are also reduced. This economic aspect of walking is also interesting.



CHAPTER 9

CONCEPT OF COMPOSED MIND

BODY POSTURES

Body posture is defined as the position of the body specific to the specie.

Wrong posture can affect your emotions adversely and conversely emotional disturbances affect the posture adversely. In fact emotions are most of the times reflected through body posture. In this why body posture constitute body language. Good actors use the body language to enact their role.

In routine life erect posture is preferred whenever possible. It is important to sit with back and loin touching the back of the seat. This reduces undue strain on back and reduces the chances of backache.

Erect and steady body [trunk], neck, head and eyes focussed on the tip of nose are conducive mental peace and rejuvenation.

PADMASANA and VAJRASANA are famous postures in

YOGA.

MEDITATION

There are several techniques of meditation. One may practice any method that suits him or her. But it is important to remember that all the techniques are [should be] meant for overcoming ego, broadening the mind and developing global perspective. In other words they are aimed exploring the link between the individual and universe.

Some common techniques of meditation include, transcendental meditation, Shavasana, dancing mediation, laughing meditation, walking meditation, reciting prayers called stotrapathana, singing the praise of God called Bhajana, narrating the life of prophets and saints in musical and entertaining form called Kirtana, idol worship etc. But use of alertness and rational thinking are very important as in absence of these they can shroud one's mind and take it away from the day to day realities in life.

AUTOSUGGESTIONS

The mind is usually full of opposing ideas, opposing thoughts, opposing feelings and hence the dilemmas such as the famous "To be or not be?" develop. Dilemmas lead to diffidence, indecision and inefficiency.

Autosuggestions are usually meant for helping an individual develop positive frame of mind and overcome the negative thoughts, develop confidence, decisiveness and efficiency.

However, by making thoughtless autosuggestions one may get trapped in one's own petty ideas of success and failures.

But some autosuggestions are based on profound philosophical insight. They are of value.

a] I shall not get angry or feel sad today because it is about, past which has gone by.

b] I shall not worry or get restless because it is about

future, which may not come.

c] I shall thank the nature or God for the bounties, because they are many times concealed and not apparent.

d] I shall respect everyone, because global unity is an objective reality.

e] I shall do my duty honestly because honesty means exploring the socially beneficial element in my work and that would prevent dragging of mind from getting distracted towards and infatuated by fallacious and illusive glamour present elsewhere.

BREATHING

CHALE VAATE CHALE CHITTAM

NISCHALAM NISCHALO BHAVET

If your breathing is uncontrolled and erratic then your mind also remains disturbed. Conversely if your breathing is controlled and steady then your mind also becomes steady and stable.

Deep, slow and controlled breathing is very useful. It seems to act through the harmonization of reticular activating system. This makes you calm and fresh and reduces mental agitation and disturbability.

However, Pranayama usually involves retention of breath. Timing of inspiration, expiration, retention and that of holding the breath after expiration, are important. The proportion of the timings is also important. The force and the frequency of respiration have also to be appropriate. The status of the body systems in general but particularly the status of the respiratory and cardiovascular systems has to be judged properly before one starts pranayama. Besides all these there has to be a Guru who is expert and can guide the student efficiently and safely.

One of the authorities on pranayama Swami Rama calls pranayama as the PATH OF FIRE AND LIGHT. Therefore for common individuals like us it is safer and wiser to use simple breathing exercises rather than going for difficult

techniques of pranayama.

NAMASMARAN

This traditional practice of remembering God's name is universal, simple. It is supposed to act as an anchor for thoughts and prevents abnormal wandering of thoughts and flights of imaginations. This does not require any training.

SECTION II

CONCEPTS RELATED TO INDIVIDUAL LIFE



CHAPTER 10

CONCEPT OF PHYSICAL PAIN

My first and unforgettable encounter with pain was when I was in eighth standard. It was when I had to get my molars filled. Every time the dental surgeon used to inject my gums for giving local anesthesia it used to be a real hell for me. The actual process of filling as a whole also was terrifying!

One of the interesting things about painful and pleasant experiences is that anything associated with them is remembered better.

I still remember how I used to go in a crowded S.T. bus from Savantwadi to Vengurla for this. I remember my dental surgeon Dr. Albert from Saint Luke's hospital very well. He was a tall, dark and impressive person. I can not forget how warm and affectionate he used be. His waiting room was beautiful. I can visualize it now also. There used to be some American magazines on the tea poi and the walls were adorned with paintings of flowers, Jesus and Merry.

There were many such encounters with pain, which I remember vividly.

But the most important thing is that they never could shake me! Why me alone, most of us do not get shaken by pain. This is because pain is usually not a permanent thing and never appears so. The experience of pain per se therefore does not pose a major problem in terms of bearing or controlling it with analgesic drugs popularly called painkillers.

But such experiences do not teach much about pain either.

Therefore I am going to tell you the experience of pain, which definitely posed a problem and taught me quite a bit, about handling of pain.

It is very recently that I had this opportunity to learn about pain more authentically.

I had gone to another dental surgeon. [I must be thankful to my dental surgeons for all they have done for me, but most importantly for what I have learned from the dental treatment]. This dental surgeon again a very thorough gentleman and well behaved, kind person, filled my tooth. But as the luck would have it, he realized that there was something wrong and had to remove the filling. In the best interest of my teeth and me, he started hammering to dig out that filling which had hardened. That hammering continued for such a long [or at least it appeared so], that I started palpitating and perspiring. I became almost breathless. There was not even a moment of relief! All my senses came to standstill. [I do not deny the possibility of having a very low pain threshold, but the symptoms are true! No exaggeration!].

In that utter agony I ultimately felt totally defeated in every possible way. I felt all the philosophy that I read, wrote and practiced was totally bogus, fake and useless. I felt that I was totally wrong in practicing as well upholding the NAMASMARAN as the panacea for individual and social problems! I thought that the physical pain, disease,

suffering and even the cure proved the supremacy of matter over, the so-called spirit. I sank into shame and pity about my body, my suffering, my reading, my concepts, my practice of years, my writing and my entire self.

But the next moment I realized that I was not actually remembering the name of God at that moment! I was trying to fight the pain by refusing to accept it, which was actually in accordance with the law of physical existence! The next moment I thought that let me test the power of NAMASMARAN. Let me practice the NAMSMARAN right now.

I still do not know how that thought came in my mind. But I immediately accepted the pain and started remembering the name of God in my mind. Believe it or not, all the apprehension and fear of that pain disappeared.

It seemed as if when I started remembering the name of God, I lifted myself from the plane of physical existence and allowed the things to happen in their natural way and pass through their natural course, rather than trying to resist them or reject them. The process of pain had its way to pass through my body. It passed and in fact passed away much more smoothly!

If you understand pain it can be easier to bear it.

Pain is protective in general. It alarms you about a disease and helps you to get treated. So it is like a watchman or loyal dog, who protects you from trespassers, thieves, etc. So do not hate pain. Do not try to resist it. Learn to accept it. (I know this easier said than done, but try it. At least it can reduce your pain in some instances).

Second reason why pain becomes worse is because of the lowliness associated with it. Pain makes you feel lowly. This multiplies the unpleasantness of pain. Do not feel lowly. Everybody gets pain at one time or another.

Long lasting pain can create fear of a serious disease such as cancer and this fear itself can be extremely painful!

Usually the pain is temporary and hence every time

you get pain remind yourself that it is temporary.

So if we get rid of the resistance, feeling of lowliness and fear it can at least reduce the unpleasantness of pain. It also useful to remind yourself that pain in most instances is temporary.

The next thing that may work is try to figure out the processing of pain sensation in your brain.

Try to remember the name of God you worship. This can further reduce the fear and the apprehension the unpleasantness associated with pain.

Yet another thing that makes pain unpleasant is the fact that pain usually distracts you from your job. This is especially true if it is an intellectual job. In such situation you start feeling suffocated, as you are not able to work. To overcome this feeling of suffocation, let yourself get the freedom to relax and stop thinking about the work.

However, in spite of everything written above about pain, pain may be very difficult to manage in many circumstances. In such cases it is wise to take recourse to powerful analgesic [pain-killer] and anxiolytic [anti-anxiety] drugs or other measures under the guidance and instruction of a competent family doctor or consultant. In India also there are pain clinics where the intractable pain is efficiently relieved.



CHAPTER 11

HOW TO OVERCOME THE SHAME OF BEING NON-NORMAL?

Most of us think in a particular manner and hence fit in the range of normality. They fit in the range of conventional acceptability. But some of us think differently. Others sometimes ridicule them and that leads to development of some kind of shame or feeling of inferiority. This is especially so till they achieve social status.

In my view these individuals can be asset to the society and hence, a) ridiculing them must be stopped and b) they should realize that they are swans and not ugly ducklings.

Here is a reason for this. Consider this question. “Can we refer the light as white or bright darkness and darkness as black or dark light?” It appears foolish. Isn’t it? It may appear strange or merely semantic and even absurd to many others.

Most of us would say, “When ever and where ever there are light rays we call it light and when ever and where ever there are no light rays, we call it darkness. So there is no question of referring light as darkness and referring darkness, as light!”

Actually the question is not absurd. The answer is as follows. What we call as darkness, in fact constitutes the electromagnetic radiations, which we do not and can not see with naked eyes. The darkness therefore does not imply absence of light. In fact these radiations are “light” which appears dark or black to us, as we can not see them. So the so called, darkness is not at all absence of light but actually constitutes the vast majority of radiations. In fact the number of radiations present in so called darkness which we do not see are several times in number as compared to those, which we see. So it is quite appropriate to refer the darkness, as dark or black light!

Also what we refer to as light is actually constituted of radiations which have wavelengths between about 400 to 700 nanometers only. This is a very small fragment of the entire electromagnetic spectrum! But, this, so called light gives us the impression, or in fact imparts the illusion, that we see everything and know everything! There is nothing beyond what we see or what we know, think, contemplate, project, imagine and interpret based on what we see! Considering the fact that this is nothing else, but ignorance, it is appropriate to call this as white or bright darkness.

Humility and boldness are one side of a coin and shyness and arrogance are the other side of the coin. Reality is infinite and eternal. Discovering link with it gives us happiness and boldness and recognizing limitations of ourselves as individuals gives us humility. Inability to recognize our limitations makes us arrogant and inability to link ourselves with the eternity makes us timid and shy!

Master and servant, leaders and followers, guru and

disciple, teacher and student, doctor and patient and in fact all of us must consider this example and develop mutual respect, boldness and humility if we aim to achieve welfare of ourselves and that of the mankind.



CHAPTER 12

HOW TO OVERCOME THE FEAR AND SHAME OF DISEASE?

It is true that some diseases such as venereal diseases bring trouble as well as shame. The recent addition to venereal diseases is AIDS. But there are many diseases, which create fear of physical [and financial] trouble as well as public humiliation. For example if we develop ischaemic disease, we would be blamed for a particular life style. If we get diabetes, we would be blamed for our diet. If we get liver cirrhosis and if we happen to be drinking even moderate quantity alcohol, we would be blamed for alcohol.

Actually in ischaemic diseases stress plays a very important role. Hence the ischaemic disease is found in many individuals who do not indulge in any of the implicated risk factors.

Diabetes mellitus is a multifactorial disease. It means

there are many causes such as stress, family history, sedentary nature of job, viral infection [which is not given adequate attention and importance] and so on.

50 to 60 % cases of liver cirrhosis present with the past history of serum hepatitis caused by hepatitis B virus. But the people and the victims too assume that all cases of cirrhosis are because of alcohol. They mindlessly begin to ridicule a cirrhotic patient, his family and everybody concerned with the alcohol [irrespective of the amount that was consumed by that person].

Ironically the patient also develops guilt complex and adds to his/her misery.

The interesting thing is that attack of serum hepatitis may go unnoticed and after several years the person may suffer from liver cirrhosis.

[One should never conclude from this that drinking is harmless. Whether taken in moderate quantity or excess, every individual may respond differently and hence if at all may drink at his or her own risk. Here the point is that of overcoming the fear of disease.]

We have to appreciate that many times we indulge in things, which are neither approved by society we live in, nor by us. This creates a sense of guilt in our mind. This is further intensified by the medical literature, which keeps on bombarding us with a variety of risk factors and make us neurotic about a variety of diseases. We come to a point when we start losing all the charm, romance and happiness in life.

We should understand that the bodily health, material possessions and family pleasures are not constant. If we get diseased today, tomorrow we may be healthy. If we are healthy today, we may be handicapped tomorrow. The fatal diseases foretell the death and suffering but their absence does not exclude the possibility of both suffering as well as death. Fear of disease is based on our ignorance about these facts.

The fear can be overcome if we try to develop communion

with our true selves, accept the verdict of cosmic wisdom and try to do what we can in our humble way with humility and submit our deeds to the cosmic consciousness referred to as God. One of the ways of learning to do this is by learning to chant the name of God along with slow and deep inspiration and expiration. Through that we become aware of our innate and hence true aspirations and this awareness helps us in defining and implementing our priorities preferentially. This in turn makes us more and more free and satisfied. The fear of disease, which is usually because of having unfulfilled wants and desires, becomes lesser due to this fulfillment.



CHAPTER 13

HOW TO REDUCE THE UNPLEASANTNESS OF DEATH?

To get a reasonable and satisfactory answer for this question we need to understand why first of all death is unpleasant. This is because even as the concept of death is condoned on pages 37-64 it is still necessary to consider our psychological response to death so that its unpleasantness can be reduced.

A] Death of a near and dear one is one of the most unpleasant phenomena because of several reasons, many of which are too obvious to be discussed here but some of them are as follows.

The death of a near and dear one is associated with a feeling of shame, loss, misery, missing, being left out and so on. The shame is because of what is interpreted as misfortune. The loss is because having longevity of life is considered to be gain or plus point. The feeling of misery

is because of the social interaction of sympathy or pity. The feeling of missing and feeling of being left out are because of the breach in the happy association to which one is habituated.

Death can be even more stressful if it is untimely, accidental, sudden, homicidal, suicidal or criminal.

This becomes additionally painful because it challenges the very foundation of one's mind. It defies the unconscious presumption and logic that death is associated with old age. It inflicts severely state of complacency or unguardedness. It makes us vulnerable to psychological shock.

In the present circumstances the medical treatment has become extremely expensive and death of a near and dear one can take place merely because of financial constraints. This would be associated with sense of guilt and add additional painful dimensions to the sad event.

Death of a spouse or son/daughter is considered to be far more stressful than that of the others. This is because it is associated with several other factors which cause crippling of the daily existence. Death of spouse can mean besides intense emotional bereavement, crippling economic loss. It can mean tremendous deficiency in bringing up of the children, looking after household affairs to many other problems. These things create besides extreme unpleasantness fear and apprehension about death of the near dear ones. This leads to constant anxiety and worry about our close ones' security.

B] Our own death is also probably the most dreaded and unpleasant phenomenon for every one of us:

In Marathi there is a poem which states:

MRUTYUNE JANA BAHATAT PARI
TE BHOGASA VAITAGUNI
MRUTYO YEU NAKO ASE VINAVITI
SARE PARANTU MANI

This means, many of us, may say that they want to die

but it is only because of the frustrations and troubles in life [and also because of the lack of appreciation of the gravity of death]. But when it actually comes to die they realize how ghastly it is and request the death not to come to them.

This is probably because we witness that death is usually associated with misery, helplessness and pain for the dying person. We see a characteristic desire to live in the eyes of a dying person. We witness the desperate and frantic efforts to live and the despair and defeat in the face of impending death. We notice the feeling of utter shame and indignation. There is pining, begging and urging to the doctors or God, or a friend for some more breaths.

This picture is agonizing and creates permanent aversion and fear about our own death.

In addition, we notice the plight of the family members of the deceased. It produces fear in our mind that if we die there could be similar plight of our dependents. We fear that our death could cause sense of loss, sense of insecurity, sense of self pity, feeling of guilt, feeling of shame [for being the target of mercy, pity and sympathy and so on] to our near and dear ones and let them down. We start despising the very thought of death.

There is one poem describing this:

ROJ SAKALI RAVIKIRANANSAH
YUDDHAKAHANYA GHUSATI NETRI
ANI BHAYACHA PADADA GHEUNA
ZHURATO AMHI DIVASA RATRI

The poet describes that when he gets up in morning and opens a newspaper, the news of war pierce his eyes! They assault him! He finds this so much shocking that he begins to live miserably day and night constantly in the veil of fear!

The unpleasantness and/or fear of the death of near and dear ones can be overcome to a great extent by internalizing the concept of SANKALPA and

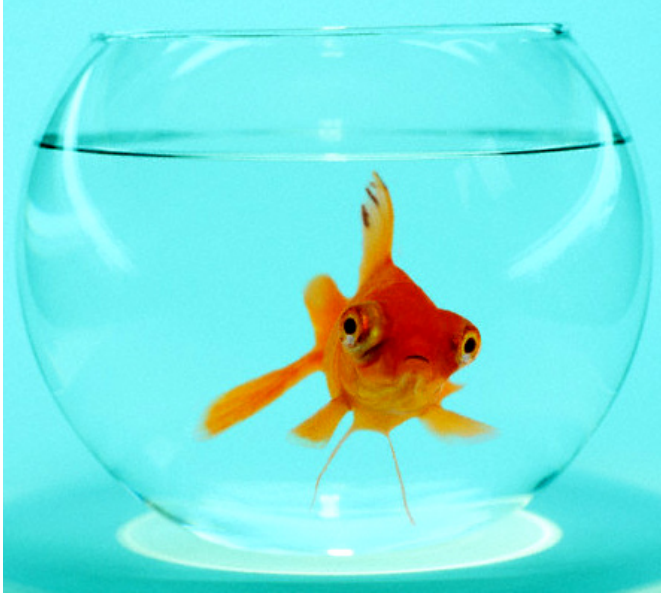
KARMAPHALASIDDHANTA.

The deeds in this and previous lives of that person [KARMAPHALA OR PRAKTANA] and the desire of the person or his/her plans for the next life [SANKALPA] which neither he/she nor any one us know, decide the course of events. We however are usually unaware of our ignorance and hence arrogant. This ignorance coupled with arrogance makes us over reactive to death. It almost makes us hysterical. It can explode us from within and destroy the very foundation of charm and hope in life. By virtue of this ignorance the extent of unpleasantness increases tremendously. Our ignorance and arrogance cause confusion about the logic and justification of the course of events. We fail to understand or grasp the events and interpret them meaningfully and that makes us feel even worst.

If we train ourselves in the concept of KARMAPHALASIDDHANTA AND SANKALPA then we would be able rise above our personal feelings and then think of the whole series of events from the point of view of the life of that person who is dying.

Even death of one's son or daughter can become less painful if the parents are given to understand this point of view of KARMAPHALASIDDHANTA and SANKALPA. If the parents are trained in these concepts and trained to look at the event in their light then feeling of loss, humiliation, misery etc can be significantly reduced.

Every one of us is bound to leave our body some time or other. If we grasp above concepts then we would be able to face diseases, handicap or death in a more dignified manner in view of the KARMAPHALASIDDHANTA and SANKALPA of ours. This helps us to recognize our ignorance and thereby enables us to overcome apparent discrepancy between our expectations and the actual reality. It gives us the insight into the possible link of causality not known to us.



CHAPTER 14

HOW TO OVERCOME LONELINESS?

We feel lonely because we are habituated to physically meet and interact with family members, colleagues, friends, etc. We are habituated to meet and interact with even the characters in TV serials, dramas, movies, whom we do not actually meet! We also are habituated to dream and interact with those whom we neither see on TV, stage or on screen!

Alternatively the “stars” in different field get addicted to public applaud either directly or through mail and hence feel lonely when this vanishes.

If we are old, then we feel even lonelier. This is because we are habituated to authority. We are habituated to act as respected decision-makers. We are used to caring for, looking after and supporting our children. We are used to believe that all along we have been shaping them and their future! Once our children are independent and away, everything starts dwindling. Our children are no more dependent on us for physical, emotional, intellectual,

economic, or for that matter, any kind of support. They do not need our guidance, help, love, warmth and care etc. But far more important is the fact that our children create independent and separate “shells” full of new relationships and new interactions! We are not allowed in the intimate emotional, decisive intellectual transactions going on in these “shells” i.e. families of our daughters or sons. We are rendered secondary and tertiary and relegated to outer or peripheral region. In fact this is like having been forced to sever all links with the insiders and stay outside the boundary of a village! We are forced to live outside the “mind home” of our children and relatives! We in fact feel the loneliness more intensely because we are no more required except for sundry household work!

Loneliness is on the rise everywhere, in all societies, in all strata of society and in all age groups! Therefore it is worthwhile trying to find out some way of overcoming this shattering loneliness, which has acquired such a menacing form and which is one of the major causes of wide spread incidences of unrest, sadness, depression and even suicides!

Can the advanced communication system help in this? Can the extraordinary growth in traditional media such as news papers, weeklies, monthlies etc and more modern media like radio, telephones, pagers, cellular telephones, TV, Internet, cyber cafes help in solving the problem of loneliness? Can the rapidly proliferating meeting places, such conference rooms, restaurants, hotels and clubs etc. help?

If loneliness had been because of mere physical separation then they could have proved useful in solving the problem. But unfortunately loneliness is not because of mere physical separation. It is because of individualism, which has fractured the individuals from within and torn them apart from one-another! Remember that I am not talking about that individualism which inspires a person to live a life of an ascetic in search of that unifying reality and in turn lead a truly universal life. I am talking about

that individualism which misguides and prompts the family members to break apart in pursuance of physical and/or material pleasures. Such individualism nurtures the pettiness and superficiality within us and ultimately cuts us apart from our near and dear ones and makes us lonely!

The gadgets can never help when they are promoting individualism, which harnesses pettiness and superficiality. In fact because of this, the revolution in the information technology and communication system has not helped and can not help in “wielding” the process of fracturing within an individual and of incessant process of fission of hitherto relatively homogenous, harmonious and orchestrated minds. In fact it is nurturing the excessive engrossment in material pursuits worsening the problem of loneliness.

The gadgets can not create love, warmth, affection and cohesiveness amongst estranged individuals. It has to come from within! But still the technology can be useful provided it is used to convey right message and thereby inculcate the importance of promoting the evolution of the present day “primitive” individualism into more evolved individualism, which is concept and process of self-realization. The self-realization embodies realization of one’s immortal core that is one and continuous with the cores of the billions of individuals. It helps rise above the fettering pettiness. It helps us get rid of meanness, which nurtures psychological fission and separation and loneliness. It helps us see the magnanimous role we can play in revealing the intrinsic unity to the mankind and thereby express our true self, in our respective fields.

In fact the ascetics, who apparently are alone and in solitude, are in communion their true self and that of the billions of citizens of the world and also the rest of the living and nonliving universe, are not at all lonely even in the absence of any gadgets!



CHAPTER 15

HOW CAN WE OVERCOME NEGATIVE OR DEPRESSIVE THOUGHTS?

A variety of negative thoughts keep coming in mind. Negative thoughts are reflection of egoistic assumption that we should be blessed exactly in a way which our conceptual framework projects!

It is necessary to be humble about our grasp of life and kind and considerate about the sufferings of others. It is necessary to learn to hammer our ego of being robust [simply because we enjoy good physical health] also. It is essential to abandon the great error of fitting the unfathomable, infinite universe and infinite number of processes in it, in our conceptual framework, which are too frail. It is important to learn to accept the verdict of God [or nature if you do not believe in God, by realizing our limitations and ignorance], how much ever it may appear unjust! It is necessary to learn the significance of the concept of submitting our work in the heart of heart to God and adjust to the cosmic wisdom rather than trying to defy it. It is the SANKALPA i.e. the plan of subtler self from last births and the accumulated deeds of ours which decide our suffering, happiness, success and failures in

as much as our specific place in the universal panorama or “stage”! We must accept the SANKALPA and KARMA PHALA [results of our forgotten past deeds] even if they appear wrong or unjust.

This unconditional acceptance is like accepting the ambience in which we live. Thus if we are in water we first accept it. This usually happens reflexly and we frantically begin to try swimming. Were we to negate the existence of water what would happen? Thus this acceptance does not suggest acceptance of defeat and inaction, but appropriate and effective way of response and action.

Further, such acceptance of our condition, opens up hundreds of possibilities, which are concealed by our resistance or denial of a given situation. This opening up of possibilities gives us tremendous strength and vision for appropriate action.

To give an example, it is such denial of the ambience that frustrates many well-meaning, sincere and dedicated scientists, leaders, artists, social reformers etc, who develop extreme bitterness and depression in later stages of their lives, because of failures.

The negative thoughts that we are lowly, unfortunate, miserable would begin disappearing along with dissolution of egoistic assumptions as we start accepting wholeheartedly the fate of our work, as well as well being.

They would gradually start disappearing as we start to realize that somewhere deep inside we have to confront the reality with respect to life and death. Realization of truth is always coupled with immense fearlessness, bliss and independent of the fate of our work or any other external factor. In simple words, it is a state when you are in communion with God and that enables you to remain stable and strong in every situation, which we accept as the verdict of cosmic wisdom. Moreover since we are in communion with that cosmic consciousness it appears to be our own desire. This resolves the problem of likes and dislikes and automatically helps us remain steady in our

goal and activity as a worship of God or the manifestation of our conscience.

It is very true that all negative thoughts and actions do not disappear. But there is no harm trying the ideas described in the foregoing because they are harmless and are likely prove useful if not immediately at least in the course of time.



CHAPTER 16

HOW TO OVERCOME JEALOUSY?

Some jealousy is normal. The other commonly used word for jealousy is heartburn!

It is to some extent natural to feel jealous when we find that those individuals who according to us are undeserving get much more than what we [the more deserving in our own opinion!] do.

But when individual considerations take supreme place in our lives we become increasingly mean and jealous. It becomes troublesome to others, as well as to us. This is because we do not understand and hence unknowingly disobey the wisdom of homeostasis and harmony. If we understand the concept of homeostasis, then we can definitely overcome morbid jealousy to a great extent!

Homeostasis means maintenance of various physical and chemical characteristics of the internal environment of the body within certain range. This is important for the health of an organism. All the cells of the body of an organism, which perform their functions, participate in

this process also.

Remember that the organism is healthy if the cells are healthy and doing their work thereby contributing in homeostasis. Conversely the cell is healthy if the organism is healthy.

Different body cells which when perform their roles with complementarity and in harmony ensure health of the organism, which in turn ensures the health of individual cells. The society is like an organism.

Every individual is like a cell of this organism.

Different individuals have different duties just as different cells have different functions to perform.

When different individuals and social groups perform their duties with complementarity and in harmony, ensure healthy, happy and prosperous society. This in turn would ensure the health [happiness and prosperity and profundity] of an individual!

The control mechanisms in body which if work properly and ensure proper homeostasis, the organism would enjoy health and the control mechanisms would in turn be healthy.

The various government agencies and power centers in society are like the control mechanisms, which govern the overall process of homeostasis. If the government agencies and power centers ensure that various individuals and social groups do their duties with complementarity and in harmony, then society would enjoy prosperity and profundity. This in turn would ensure strength to the government.

Today the governments are finding it difficult to ensure “homeostasis”. Previously, the old orders functioned as control mechanisms and ensured social homeostasis i.e. working of individuals and social groups with complementarity and in harmony, by compromising the freedom of the individuals.

With rapid rise of individualism and disappearance of old orders, a process of petty pursuits and rat race for

material gains [under the attractive name of individual freedom, individual aspirations etc.] began to disrupt the complimentary and harmonious transactions and relationships. Everything within the individuals, between the individuals and between different groups became diseased. In turn the society has become “diseased”. Every individual has become “diseased”. The governments have also become diseased. [Hence they are weak, short lasting and/or malfunctioning! This is a result of rapid disintegration and disappearance of the old orders and lack of their replacement with new appropriate and efficient orders.

Jealousy can be overcome to a great extent, if individualism is evolved into and taken to its logical culmination, viz. self-realization. It helps in revealing the concealed unity and harmony within ourselves as well as outside. It helps to explore and acquire the powerhouse within you. It brings out your innate desire to do socially beneficial physical, economic, social and political work in your respective specialty, so that you can simultaneously achieve personal and social welfare. Your efforts in this direction are so satisfying that you almost no more feel jealous even if you do not get anything in return or in fact get flak and harassment.

One of the simple ways of doing this is practicing remembrance of the name God. Some people call it “thought anchor”. Remembering the name of God helps us to get rid of superficial and petty considerations, born out of ignorance and responsible for jealousy [which can actually spoil our family life, friendships and even image, status in the society and most importantly even physical health!]



CHAPTER 17

HOW TO OVERCOME FRUSTRATION?

It has to be appreciated that life is never static. The situations do not remain the same. Naturally, the frustration also in most cases is temporary. It is not at all unusual to get frustrated from time to time and overcoming the frustrations also from time to time.

But in some cases frustration can be much severer. In such cases it is associated with tremendous damage to one's self esteem and a feeling of defeat, humiliation and shame. It is associated with enormous demoralization and diffidence. Frustration in such cases can last for years and can prove to be abysmal and even fatal if untreated. Hence it is essential to learn about frustration and evolve and practice the ways [learning about it is in itself a way to overcome it] to overcome it.

What is the usual cause of frustration?

The usual cause of frustration is a setback. The setback may be in the form of failure in examination, failure in love life or failure in one's goal. The nature of setback and

its severity would determine the degree of frustration. As stated earlier, in most cases the setbacks are trivial and the frustration also mild and relatively less damaging and short lasting.

How do setbacks cause frustration?

The setbacks are usually attributed by others and knowingly or unknowingly by you us too, to either our stupidity or to sinful behavior! Even sad events in family such s accidents, diseases, death etc on which may not have any control, are many times attributed to some sins in the past. So such calamities make us additionally miserable and lowly and ashamed and guilty. It is also true that the frustrations worsen because of aggressive advertising that stimulates the desires and creates ever-increasing demands, without correspondingly increasing the capacity to fulfill those demands! This increase in unfulfilled demands makes us feel lowly in even in otherwise acceptable circumstances. Advertisements also tend to create and nurture the elements of competitiveness and jealousy, which lead to frustration in the instances of failures in pursuits.

Can setbacks be avoided?

It appears that it would have been wonderful if setbacks could have been avoided. But the nature of life is such that setback is a part of it. In fact set backs are actually useful and help us rise above our ego. Besides they enhance the taste of success.

It is true that in many instances the setbacks can be due to stupidity. But it is essential to appreciate that it is not at all unusual or abnormal to be stupid in some situations. There is nothing wrong in it. There is nothing to feel lowly about it. It is always easy to point out mistakes and hence people may point out others' mistakes but that never means that they do not commit mistakes. In fact they may be committing even worse mistakes. So we should not let ourselves down by setbacks or insulting comments made on our setbacks Also, we must take

care not to get carried away by selfish, stupid, maniacal a variety of wrong acquaintances around who besides hurting can misguide and harm us.

But for our own sake it is always beneficial to keep the mind open to suggestions and learning from other [but proper] people. If we listen to honest and selfless advice coming from the expert in your field, then we are likely to commit fewer mistakes. This can help us avoid many setbacks in many instances.

But in many instances the set backs can not be prevented. Even as everyone prefers to be perfect no one is actually perfect. Even as ideally we all feel that we should be flawless actually we are not. In such instances if we carefully observe, we would realize that we do not have control on the past deeds. Therefore the only way to overcome frustration born out of setbacks associated with the feeling of guilt and shame born out of our “sins” or “mistakes” is, to analyze the nature of setbacks, rationally.

Setbacks in robbery and setbacks in efforts of saving a life can cause equal degree of frustration! But the frustration in these two cases is qualitatively different. These two examples illustrate the importance of pursuit. Therefore we must learn to distinguish between mistakes, failure and frustration in pursuit of excellence and the same committed in pursuit of social destruction. The pursuit in which we suffer setbacks and as a result get frustrated is extremely and possibly the only important thing. Our pursuit determines quality of life! This understanding of the pursuit itself is the first and foremost step to accept the setbacks and failures in a dignified manner and overcome the frustration. In some cases it is possible that you might have got frustrated because your pursuits as well as action both were criminal and led to damaging effects on your life. Even in such case I would urge you not to let yourself down in your own eyes. Accept yourself unconditionally irrespective of your likes and dislikes (or values inculcated in you right from your

child hood) and also insulting comments from others. The traditional practice of NAMASMARAN is useful for this. We must remain concerned and particular about proper nutrition, cleanliness, aesthetic selection of clothes, color combinations, perfumes etc. these help us improve self-image, feel better and thereby overcome frustration more efficiently.

Always remember that it is never too late to start all a new and shape your future. Instead of brooding over your past mistakes and even crimes, it is always better to learn from them and improve. It is always nice to remember how the robber Walya became the great sage and poet Walmiki who wrote RAMAYANA.

The next thing is to overcome the feeling of helplessness and despair. Due to this one starts developing a tendency to avoid people, friends, relatives etc. This leads to isolation and deprivation of support and even the imagination that the others think low about us i.e. treat us as lowly. This leads to bitterness and a process of perpetual isolation, helplessness, lack of support and bitterness.

You may try and speak about it to selected good friends but it is generally better to talk as if you are discussing some body else's problem and not yours! By this way you learn about the issue without letting yourself down in the eyes of your friends.

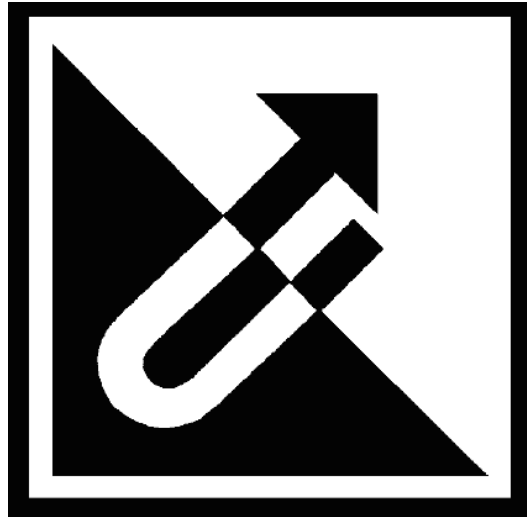
The last thing is to understand the difference between the realized souls such as saints etc. and common people like us.

It is true that the realized souls are always in bliss. This is because they work from a different level of consciousness. They are enlightenment personified. They are like engineers and architects who do not have to actually work like a mason (a common man).

You can take the example of a doctor and a nurse. The doctor gives prescription and the nurse complies with it. The nature of the work of a doctor and that of a nurse are different. The doctor may sleep peacefully when the nurse

is actually attending the patient at ungodly hours!

It has to be appreciated that just as the body consciousness [thinking that we are mere body], makes us susceptible to fear and apprehension, similarly entanglement in what we call as “our work” also causes tremendous anxiety, depression and frustration. Our thoughts, work, aims etc. are not our personal property and hence should not be taken too seriously. Let them pass through the body, mind and intelligence! They manifest from eternity and disappear back into eternity. Our bodies, minds, intelligence etc. are not the doers. They are only the vehicles through which, the so called “our work”, gets delivered! This statement is not polemical or metaphorical. Actually speaking neither our bodies, nor our mind nor our intelligence can even choose our parents, the environment and the subsequent opportunities, though we may feel so. This has one more implication. Since it is not “our”, neither is it appropriate to feel ashamed about “our work”, or, for that matter, all that we did, would do, enjoy or suffer, nor is it appropriate to feel proud about it. Neither is it correct to give up and do nothing nor is it correct to helplessly and obsessively get entangled in the work and its results. We should maintain our “vehicles” very well and use them properly to “carry the goods”, which we are supposed to deliver! BUT WE ARE NOT VEHICLES! Continuation of efforts to make your perspective universal, evolve universally beneficial policies and evolve their administration and implementation can significantly reduce the degree of frustration and can give at least some strength and help you to overcome frustration, in case you have it!



CHAPTER 18

WHY DO WE INDULGE IN OR REFRAIN FROM THINGS AND REPENT LATER?

It is true that many of us plan to live in one way or another. We have our ideas about pleasures, happiness, comforts, dreams, aspirations etc. which result from myriad of influences which act on our body, instincts, mind, thoughts and so on. The nature of influences varies from person to person and from one place to another. It varies from society to society. These influences range from literature promoting celibacy to literature upholding eroticism. They vary from preaching of asceticism to propaganda of indulgence. They are in short, quite confusing and make it very difficult for us to find out what exactly we want!

We keep negotiating with these influences through out our lives and while doing so also trying to define a “state of happiness”! It has to be appreciated that the idea of such a state is ever changing and inconstant. It varies! In the process we keep on attributing to the state of happiness some characteristics [which also keep on varying] and

then keep on trying to modify ourselves accordingly! Thus we keep trying to get rid of some things and acquire some others. These things also vary from time to time! The nature of these things varies from trifles such getting a cake of choice to relish to controlling the desire. It varies from getting into a particular lucrative career to leaving everything and becoming a nun. It varies from getting a hall ticket for the examination to bunking the exam. It varies from winning someone's heart to marry to remaining unmarried. It varies from acquiring a particular skill to getting rid of the same. It varies from desire of acquiring a particular knowledge to developing disgust about the same and getting interested in another. It varies from getting sexual gratification to keeping celibacy. It varies from desiring to smoke to desiring to quit it. It varies from indulging in drinking alcohol to abstaining from it.

The problem is that we are usually not able to understand the nature of our instincts, emotions and intelligence and hence there is always a discrepancy between what we want to be and what we actually turn out to be!

There are a couple of things, which if we understand and internalize, then this problem could be overcome at least to some extent.

The first thing is that we must appreciate that we do not understand ourselves. The subconscious mind is not accessible. The past beyond a certain range is not accessible. The future is not completely predictable. Even the influences beyond a certain range are too subtle to be recognized and understood. We should therefore be humble and not get into a feeling of uselessness or helplessness about failing to practice of what we think, feel and project [we may use the word expectations, predictions etc.]. This helps us to accept the discrepancy between our expectations, predictions, demands, desires, aspirations and so on [in our life as well that in the life of the others and the society] and what actually happens! It must be appreciated that such acceptance does not mean inactive witnessing of what happens but it means poised,

and wiser response! It is usually beneficial not only to ourselves but to others as well.

The second thing is to preserve and harness the capacity to appreciate our ignorance and responding wisely. The timetested remedy for this, is regular chanting of the name of God or Guru. Regular chanting or remembering the name of God helps us elevate ourselves above the confusing and chaotic ideas. It helps us to overcome the gravity of our preferences and our apprehensions. Through the practice of remembering the name of God it starts becoming clear that the sense of guilt as well as sense of pride result from, the deep seated ignorance of the ignorance! Hereafter we gradually start actually internalizing the importance of accepting the situation in personal as well as public life as it is and then start working on it without instinctual and emotional turmoil and intellectual confusion. This marks the beginning of true inner harmony and freedom from the damaging and disturbing guilt and equally troublesome agrandizement and arrogance about what we can not and what we can achieve respectively.

Gradually we begin to appreciate that what we do is a result of the preponderance of SATVA, RAJA and TAMA within and outside our limited existence. Our limited thinking has no right to be proud about it and no reason to be guilty about it. Our brain has no reason to be perplexed and we have no reason to be sad!

There is great fun in taking life in one's stride! [Even in making attempt to do so!]

SECTION III
CONCEPTS RELATED TO SOCIAL LIFE



CHAPTER 19

HOW CAN WE OVERCOME THE STRESS CAUSED BY CONCEPTUAL CHAOS IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION?

Most of us get disturbed by what is going on in the field of education. But we do not understand the causes of the chaos and the remedy for them.

We will be benefited if we review in brief the concept of education and merits and demerits of the traditional education system in brief.

Education is defined in various ways but it can be safely said to have three domains, which are as follows.

The first domain is called AFFECTIVE DOMAIN. This means the state of mind. In simple words affective domain relates to how we feel. Thus when our mind is full of alertness, attention, enthusiasm, buoyancy, affection, concern, joy, tolerance, self esteem, mutual respect, mutual trust, commitment, dedication, confidence, positive and victorious spirit, we would call it healthy affective domain. In addition the zeal and concentration needed in the pursuit of excellence in intellectual field, tenacity and endurance required in skillful activities and

patience and commitment essential for satisfying and socially beneficial actions constitute affective domain. The purpose of education is to nurture this domain by designing suitable curricula and syllabi.

The second domain of education is called PSYCHOMOTOR DOMAIN. This implies ability to appreciate skills and ability to perform physical and mental skills, with speed, accuracy, elegance, ease of performance etc. This may involve appreciation and performance of skills such as surgery, playing a musical instrument, playing basket ball or doing carpentry! The purpose of education is to nurture this domain through not only designing suitable curricula, syllabi but also by providing sufficient practical and demonstration classes with all the necessary equipment.

The third domain is called COGNITIVE DOMAIN. Cognitive domain incorporates accurate perspective, contemplation, correct perception understanding, conceptualization, analysis and recall of problems, ability to evaluate, synthesize, correlate and make decisions, make appropriate policies, plans and expertise in the management, administration, etc.

It is clear that all the domains have three components viz. Cognition [Perception], affect [Feelings] and conation [Response].

Let us consider the traditional system in a dispassionate manner and scrutinize the merits and demerits. It is obvious that we will not be able to consider all the details of the system as they varied from time to time and from place to place. But a general review of the system would help us to overcome our disturbance! This can be done only if we rise above the petty considerations of religion, region, caste, political power and other vested interests. This would help us rectify the present education system.

Conversely, unless the existing education system is rectified appropriately subsequent generations may not be able to develop the three domains of education

adequately.

Many of you may argue here that this task can not be accomplished by common people, but can be successfully accomplished only by the politicians, political advisors, the decision-makers and the top administrators.

This argument is valid, but not completely. It has to be appreciated that no statesman, no political leader, no policy maker and no administrator can bring about change in an existing system unless, there is consensus about these changes in the vast majority of people whose cooperation in such matters is very vital.

So let us take at least a cursory look at the traditional system of education in India.

The traditional education system in general ensured that:

- a] Careers were not selected on the basis of monetary gains,
- b] Careers were not selected arbitrarily on the basis of idiosyncrasies and whims,
- c] Some lucrative careers could not be sought after excessively, in preference to the others,
- d] All careers ensured income and production from early age,
- e] All careers ensured that society was benefited,
- f] All careers ensured security to all the social groups,
- g] All the careers ensured intimacy and closeness between young and old in the families.
- h] All careers ensured ethical education and passage of experience from generation to generation.

In my view these were merits.

But it is true that:

- a] The traditional system was marked by deprivation of scholastic education to many people,
- b] It was also marked by apparently unjustifiable

distribution of a variety of jobs amongst different castes.

- c] It did not have the infrastructure for collective scientific and technological efforts
- d] Suppressed talents and individual aspirations amongst the children and parents from many castes.
- e] It had an element of arbitrary imposition of hierarchy and exploitation.

As the education shifted from homes, home industries and farms to; nurseries, K.G. schools, schools, colleges, universities, corporate industries, research institutions etc.

Cognition suffered because of:

- a] Huge number of students, in a single class making following three things almost impossible. These things are i] individual attention ii] dialogue iii] discussions,
- b] Lack of adequate salary, accountability, incentive and economic security to the teachers taking away the initiative of nurturing cognitive domain
- c] Increase in alienation with respect to student's background and aptitude
- d] Lack of adequate incentive to the students in the form of creativity, production and earning, service to the family and service to the nation, takes away the motivation required for building up cognitive domain
- e] Lack of conviction essential in the growth of cognitive domain in the teachers and students because of outdated practical and demonstration classes, lack of interdisciplinary dialogue and in general the irrelevance of education to the realities of day to day life in as much as almost predictable consecutive unemployment at the end! The lack of conviction could be partly due to lack of participation by teachers in decision-making, policy making, development of curricula,

syllabi etc.

- f] Emphasis on recall and hence rote learning thereby denying free inquiry, reading, questioning etc. thereby directly thwarting the cognitive domain
- g] Too many examinations with irrelevant parameters or criteria of evaluation [besides being unfair in many instances] lead to misguided and in most cases counterproductive efforts thus adversely affecting the cognitive domain
- h] Competitions where the manipulative skills, callousness, selfishness are given more respect, destroy the enthusiasm of growing in cognitive domain
- i] Information explosion can affect cognitive domain by either causing enormous and unnecessary burden on memory or inferiority complex
- j] Pressure of interviews causing constant tension and sense of inadequacy, right from the tender age,
- k] Protracted hours of homework in schools denying the students their legitimate right to enjoy their childhood and make them physically, mentally and intellectually unfit to grow in cognitive domain
- l] Irrelevant and unnecessary information loading in lectures in the form of monologue, leading to suppression of the spontaneity, originality, interest and enthusiasm so much required in cognitive development amongst the students,

Affective domain suffered due to,

- a] Isolation of the children from their parents and their domestic environment at an early age [Making the parents also equally sad]
- b] Lack of warm bonds due to huge number,
- c] Cut throat competition,
- d] Inadequate facilities of sports, trekking,

educational tours, recreation and physical development etc

- e] Alienation from one's social environment and culture Psychomotor domain suffered due to

A] Almost total lack of opportunities to actually participate in skillful activities such as drawing, painting, sewing, sculpturing, carpentry, knitting, weaving, music, agriculture, horticulture, other handicrafts, various sports, performing arts etc.

It is important to realize that promotion of psychomotor domain is evident but in its caricature form. It has no concrete economic realistic basis. The activities have no economic incentive and no productive element.

The present education system basically and almost completely prevents a huge section of society such as teachers, students, clerks, servants, sweepers and many others such as education inspectors, etc. from being creative and productive. In addition it causes colossal loss of space, electricity, construction cost and so on. In addition because of the typical emphasis on rote learning it leads to phenomenal waste of educational material such as paper, bags, pencils, ball pens etc.

Lack of productive element in education not only causes colossal loss to nation but it also causes economic loss to children while suppressing and starving their psychomotor domain! The lack of productive element and economic incentive is a single most important cause of

- i] Reduction in the dignity of labor amongst those who continue to learn, as well as reduction in the income of the concerned families and the nation
- ii] Lack of education, lack of employment and starvation or criminalization amongst those who are forced to drop out because the poor villagers' children normally contribute to the earning of the family.
- iii] Inhuman suffering of those dropouts, who somehow manage to get into cheap labor for

subsistence.

It has to be appreciated that billions of rupees are spent on construction, decoration and maintenance of schools and colleges. Billions more are spent on payment of millions of teachers and other staff members engaged in unproductive exercises. Billions are spent on electricity, and so called educational material. Billions more are spent on the exams conducted to test the “capacity and merit of rote learning”. This way we weaken the national economy, jeopardize the developmental activities and force millions of students to drop out due to economic reasons and get into the hell of child labor, besides starving and suppressing the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of millions. In short, present day education system harnesses [amongst those who continue to learn] arrogance coupled with lack of confidence leaving all the domains viz. cognitive, psychomotor and affective, [including creative and productive skills and physical health] defective, deficient and underdeveloped. Further, when this education fails to give a job, it tends to create vindictive attitude transforming an individual into a criminal or develops frustration and transforms an individual into a mental wreck.

It must be appreciated that some institutions and individuals are making illustrious efforts in the direction of rectifying the education at their level.

But the chaos in the present education and the resultant conceptual stress cannot be managed effectively, unless we propagate this conceptual understanding about education and try to see that suitable changes are made to nurture cognitive, affective, psychomotor and productive domains.

In short it can be stated that every school, college, university etc must become the centers of production and service besides being centers excellence in science, art, literature, philosophy etc.

The student must have economic incentive for what he/

she is privileged to make. Besides, everybody connected with education directly or indirectly must be involved in production or service.

Everyday approximately

20 % of the time must be spent in production, service etc.

20 % of the time must be spent in physical activities

20 % of the time must be spent in personality development and

20 % of the time must be spent in entertainment

20 % of the time must be spent on cognitive domain

Production may be of suitable items and service can involve community projects such as plantation, cleanliness etc. Physical activities can include sports, exercise, trekking, hiking etc.

Personality development refers to broadening of perspective through various means such as invited guest lectures, seminars, discussions on holistic health, educational tours and visits to places where the student gets exposed to rapid developments in the society such as laboratories, airports, government offices, share market, farms etc.

Entertainment could include playing musical instruments, dance, painting or anything that makes a student happy such as mimicry, singing, story telling, drama, movie etc. Development of cognitive domain can include teaching of languages, history, geography, mathematics etc with utmost emphasis on interpretation and relevance in day to day life. Thus typical questions in the examination of history, languages should be totally done away with. The subject such as economics, psychology, civics, philosophy, logic, sociology etc must include field work and made relevant to the present society.

Conceptual stress arising out of chaos in education can not be managed effectively unless and until a situation



CHAPTER 20

STRESS RESULTING FROM INADEQUATE UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONSUMER INTEREST

Most of us think that consumer interest is restricted to quality production, appropriate preservation, proper transportation, fair exchange and fidelity in advertising. This is not incorrect understanding but this is certainly not complete understanding of consumer interest.

As a consumer in any given place or field, we should be aware of the plight of the consumers elsewhere and in other fields. We can not be balanced, objective and holistic in the absence of such awareness. In fact such lack awareness tends to make us selfish, short sighted and mean. The perspective of consumer movement becomes tubular and hence can not give proper direction to the government perspective, policies, decision, administration and implementation, with respect to customers every where.

In fact this is precisely what has happened to consumer movement in developed countries. A huge section of consumers in developed as well as many developing

countries [like India] is very sensitive about its interests. These interests are with respect to quality, preservation and pricing. No one can argue in favor of bad quality, faulty preservation and unfair exchange or cheating. Another concern of this section of consumers is their insistence on fidelity with the advertisement. They insist that there should be no exaggeration and/or falsification in the advertising. Even this point can not be refuted. No one would justify exaggeration and/or falsification.

So this section of consumers is not just unopposed but is actually supported all over the world enjoys and moral and ethical supremacy.

But note that this section of consumers has no perspective of global welfare. It has always neglected the major issues such as environmental protection, proper and universal education, world harmony, universal brotherhood, global health, global housing, proper handling of droughts, famines, earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruption, nuclear proliferation, effect of pesticides and chemical fertilizers in the long run and such issues.

This section has nothing to do with the needs of rest of the mankind. It continues to consume several times more than their counterpart in either the same or other countries. This negligence towards the needs of rest of the mankind makes this section selfish, short sighted, mean and callous. The elite consumer [in as much even the poor] in India also has adopted this selfish, short sighted, mean and callous perspective. This is why the consumer movement [in spite of having some genuinely good elements in it] has miserably failed at global and local level, to influence the government perspective, policies, decision, administration and implementation, with respect to consumers every where and every strata of life. Few examples of such policies are with respect to prevention famines, preservation of forests, advertisements of alcoholic beverages, advertisements of cigarettes, advertisement of gutkha [a specially processed tobacco that is used for chewing and which is at present a

craze amongst school children in many parts of the world] etc.

It is precisely because of this selfish, short sighted, mean and callous perspective that many of us applaud the construction of fly over bridges in cities while unknowingly neglecting the plight of farmers and villagers where there is no drinking water, no proper shelter and no proper education. We do not seem to understand that the fly over bridges is no solution to the congestion and other problems of cities and the only solution is the holistic development [in contrast to mercenary urbanization of villages, and which was incidentally the dream of Mahatma Gandhi.].

It has to be appreciated that consumer interest can not be restricted to mere material financial gains and utility for above reason. It has to be coupled with perspective of global welfare as a result of which balanced and accurate policies, plans, decisions, administrative efforts and implementation at global and local level can be evolved. In fact this constitutes spiritual, intellectual, emotional, instinctual and physical health.

This is the only way to manage conceptual stress as a consumer. There is no other way. With narrow perspective you can not manage conceptual stress. Even if with narrow, selfish, short sighted, mean and callous perspective, you seem to gain materially, ultimately you will be the loser, materially as well as spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, instinctually and physically. This is because majority the present policies at global and local level are sure to entail destruction of individual as well as the global life if not timely corrected. Your doctor if knowledgeable enough, will endorse this, when you visit him/her next.



CHAPTER 21

HOW TO MANAGE THE STRESS RESULTING FROM INADEQUATE GRASP OF EVER GROWING CORRUPTION?

Corruption is widely talked about but poorly thought over and understood. Because of this, deceptive sense of pride, hypocrisy, guilt, confusion, conflict, helplessness, victimization and many such things result. In short, we are in a state of inner disharmony and discomfort or in simple words, STRESS. This STRESS is sometimes consciously experienced but many times goes unnoticed.

Take an example of donations. If we give donation to a school we feel we are doing right thing for our child but we also are made to feel guilty because it is, in most cases illegal in India.

Conversely, if we are running a school and if government authorities do the formalities only after being bribed, then collecting donations from students for every admission and on various other occasions becomes an unavoidable part of our life. If we do not do this, then our work gets delayed and we start getting depressed and frustrated.

This dilemma is responsible for STRESS.

Take another example, that of registration of a flat. We register our flats or blocks with government because it is compulsory, but many times we land up paying extra and get a feeling of being cheated on the one hand and guilty of paying bribe on the other.

Conversely, if we are working in a particular government registry and if we are “instructed” to collect funds for the ruling political party and if we wish to retain our job in a desirable township, then making collections at every registration is inseparable from life. If we do not do it we are likely to be transferred to an interior place and suffer along with our family in every possible way.

This mental tug of war is responsible for STRESS.

One can take several such examples.

Present understanding of CORRUPTION is restricted to the illegal transactions of money, nepotism, favoritism, administrative irregularities etc.

This [inadequate] understanding is due to influences of some so called, advanced countries, which have amassed wealth and technology but are deficient in the perspective of global unity and welfare.

CORRUPTION actually includes expansionist, exploitative, oppressive, discriminatory activities. It includes the religious persecutions, fascist massacres and harassment of craftsmen in the other countries. It includes the reckless addition to pollution of environment and irresponsible consumption of power at the cost of other nations. It includes apartheid polices and their implementation. Many so called, advanced countries selectively forget their expansionist, exploitative and oppressive activities and the harm done by them to other countries. Through such selective forgetfulness and the blindfolds of vested interests of their own prosperity, they develop tubular and blurred vision and assume condescending and self-righteous position. They either don't understand or deliberately neglect the fact that the aberrations in the social, political, cultural and

economic transactions amongst the different societies, develop as a result of several factors, including invasions and exploitation to which these so called advanced countries themselves were/are responsible. Ignoring or not conceding, their own role, though indirect, in these aberrations they try to impose themselves as the moral and ethical saviors, leaders and judges on the rest of the world. They therefore, begin to use technology and facilities to make surveys on various issues and start passing their judgements. They try to enforce their norms, in the form of sanctions on industries which involve child labor, or in the form of linking labor conditions with trade pacts, through deliberations of World Trade Organization viz. WTO. They start rating the countries in terms of quantitative and qualitative corruption! It is equally pitiable that many of the Indian newspapers uphold them give wide publicity to these judgments and make every Indian feel ashamed of their motherland and guilty of corruption. This self-pity is indeed a cause of stress for an individual and detrimental to the national progress.

It must be appreciated that branding the developing countries as corrupt is tantamount to saying that all the countries which have indulged in invasions, exploitation, oppression are morally and ethically superior, merely because they are now prosperous and do not have the same aberrations in socioeconomic fields! One can surely find in these countries other aberrations, which are either concealed or given legal and moral acceptance.

If we appreciate the fact that illegal transactions of money, nepotism, favoritism, administrative irregularities etc. are, symptoms of corruption and invasions, exploitation, oppression of other countries and societies constitute ACTUAL CORRUPTION, then it would be easy to deal with corruption effectively and lead more enriched and profound life.

The “advanced” countries must understand that most of them have indulged in corruption and are continuing to do so in different forms such as, arms race, nuclear

proliferation, supplying the arms to terrorist countries etc, and hence are responsible for the symptoms of corruption in the developing countries. This is because, through such understanding alone, can they help themselves as well as the other countries, to rectify the corruption they have indulged and have been indulging in and thereby help, the rest of the countries, to rectify the symptoms of corruption, prevalent there.

This would be far more beneficial for the world and for the advanced countries themselves than the surveys [involving colossal wastage of money], arbitrary sanctions and coercive conditions of trade, [which thwart the progress of and demoralize the entrepreneurs, traders and common people of the developing countries].

If the advanced countries and people therein understand this, then they probably would develop due humility and volunteer to understand the root cause of corruption. The root cause of corruption [and subsequent symptoms of corruption] lies in:

- A) Defective cognition [perception, understanding, interpretation etc. including racist, sectarian, selfish perspective,
- B) Inappropriate affect [feelings, experience, development of superiority complex, condescending attitude etc.] and
- C) Inaccurate conation [policies, plans, administrative actions etc., adopted to serve the interests of one society or country at the cost of the others]

This concept can be applied to an individual [who may be either a common man or a policy maker] as well as a country i.e. government or people of a particular country.

These three constitute interactions between mindsets and situations.

Mindsets depend on

- a) Genetic make-up

- b] Experiences [physical, instinctual, emotional, cultural, intellectual etc.]

Various situations depend on

- a] Various laws, rules, conventions, traditions, economic policies, political policies, implementation of the policies etc.
- b] Financial status of a nation and/or an individual
- c] Social support systems
- d] Family atmosphere
- e] Geographical conditions social conditions
- f] Legacy of the past rulers

This list can be increased but it is not essential in view of shortage of space.

We can understand how corruption and symptoms of corruption are produced, by some examples.

With respect to India, the mindset of British rulers interacted to a situation, and the result of this was coercive rules and discriminatory treatment to Indian people. They neglected the development of a country. They left behind a very alien and unproductive education system. The mindset of subsequent Indian leaders, with very few exceptions like Mahatma Gandhi, interacted with this situation and the result was continuation/promotion of most of the British policies/culture. This led to a situation full of illiteracy, diseases, poverty, unemployment, inadequate development in almost every field (when viewed from the point of view of a villager, or a worker or a tribal). This situation for which the rulers, their think tank, their advisors, policy makers, implementers, administrators are responsible has plagued the mindset of most of the common Indians. Fear, insecurity, pettiness, hypocrisy, dishonesty, meekness, selfishness, shamelessness, irresponsibility, indiscipline and dirtiness, have literally shackled them.

One feature of which is increase in unemployment especially in villages and exodus from villages to cities.

Now, in such a situation where unemployment is rampant, let us see how mindset of a common man such as a footpath vendor is likely to work and give rise to symptoms of corruption.

Thus if we are footpath vendors in a metropolis like Mumbai, then bribing the police is in general integrated with our survival. If we resist this, then our survival comes in peril. If we are police, then seeking such bribes is intricately coupled with, if not our survival, preferred education of our children, appropriately pompous marriage of our daughter, pampering or entertaining our dependents, relatives, friends, living in better conditions, avoidance of transfer etc. If we refuse to be get bribed, then the others are likely to start distancing themselves from us and the seniors are likely to start feeling insecure in our presence and we are either likely to be transferred to inconvenient place or made to feel uneasy and unwise on most occasions. Our wives are likely to remain dissatisfied, our children not get the education of their choice, and we fall short of money when it comes to expensive occasions such as marriage of our daughters.

If we are ordinary civilians, then witnessing this symptom of corruption and conceding it either willingly or unwillingly is a part of our existence. Neither reporting of particular incident nor keeping silence yield beneficial results. Helplessness and stress usually continue perpetually.

You will appreciate that merely attacking and criticizing these instances viz. symptoms of corruption can never solve the problem of corruption which is deeper phenomenon affecting the situations and mindsets.

If the so called, advanced countries or those influenced by them, keep on flagellating the symptoms of corruption, without understanding and treating the corruption proper and its causes, then the corruption and the symptoms of corruption not only will continue but will actually grow. Not only criminals, but also the well-meaning people, would begin to show the symptoms of corruption! The

hypocrisy would escalate and the symptoms of corruption become acceptable and respectable in the heart! Similarly arbitrary measures such as trying to purify the bureaucracy and impose rigorous rules etc. would never prove effective in reducing symptoms of corruption and the corruption proper. This is because the so called honesty in job [absence of symptoms of corruption] is almost always exploited by, the actual corrupt elements [at national and international levels] thereby facilitating perpetual continuation of corruption and symptoms of corruption in such cases erupt elsewhere!

In Marathi there is a saying, “ ANDHALA DALATAY KUTRA PEETH KHATAY” which means a blind [honest but unwise] individual grinds the flour and a dog [corrupt and cunning element] eats it.

So

A] MAKE EFFORTS TO ERADICATE ROOTS OF CORRUPTION, IN THE MINDSETS AND SITUATIONS. DO NOT DEVELOP SENSE OF GUILT OR PRIDE BASED ON THE PRESENCE OR ABSENCE OF SYMPTOMS OF CORRUPTION RESPECTIVELY. FOR THIS,

B] EVOLVE AND NOURISH APPROPRIATE COGNITION, AFFECT AND CONATION [MINDSETS] BY PARTICIPATING IN EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE SITUATIONS BY INFLUENCING PERSPECTIVE, POLICIES, LAWS, RULES, REGULATIONS, IMPLEMENTATION, CONVENTIONS, TRADITIONS ETC. AS MAY BE RELEVANT TO YOUR FIELD OF WORK. YOUR STRESS WHETHER NOTICED BY YOU OR NOT WOULD STOP ERODING IF YOU DO THIS!



CHAPTER 22

CONCEPTUAL CONFUSION ABOUT COMMUNALISM

In Sanskrit there is a proverb

PINDE PINDE MATIH BHINNAH
KUNDE KUNDE NAVAM PAYAH
JATO JATO NAVACHARAH
NAVA VANEE MUKHE MUKHE

The meaning of this is simple and enlightening. It boosts the spirit of tolerance. It implies, every individual has different intellectual capacity, every source of water contains different water, every community has different tradition and different linguistic expression is present in every individual mouth!

So merely belonging to different castes, different religions or merely following certain customs running through generations in a family and a community etc. do not make us communal.

According to the world book dictionary, communalism refers to self-governance of a commune or communes and

this is a kind of federalism. Communal means related to commune. But in India this word has different connotation. In India, communalism implies disproportionate pride, concern about one's caste, tribe, religion or any such group and disproportionate hatred and prejudice about those of others. This is almost always associated with practices harmful to others. Communalism has become an everyday problem. It has infiltrated every walk and every stratum of life a cancer. Thus political parties, a variety of unions, various organizations etc and associations are diseased with communalism. Similarly, policies regarding employment, promotions, admission to different educational careers, competitive examinations in almost every sphere of life have been infiltrated by communalism.

To understand and overcome the menace of communalism and bring about harmony and justice in society effectively, we have to understand the caste system and the caste specific job distribution that has come into existence and remained for centuries and the emergence of religions and their impact on social life. In this chapter we will consider the development of caste system.

In my view, the caste system in India was based on the physiological principle of homeostasis where many different type of cells perform different functions so as to maintain constancy of internal environment and thereby health of the organism. Secondly it was based on the principle of variety, complementarity and harmony in nature. Thus the emergence of caste system was based on the observation that neither in body nor in nature the individual components perform the same work or job. In fact this kind of "equality" is dangerous. Complementarity of components is important and conducive to health. This entailed distribution of different jobs. This distribution of the jobs initially depended on the capacity.

However the distribution of jobs gradually became independent of the capacity and started depending on one's caste.

How could have this happened?

Firstly, it appears to me that this took place because of the observation of heredity in nature. The mango tree gives mango fruits, banana tree gives banana and coconut tree gives coconuts. The offspring of a tiger is tiger and offspring of a cat is a cat. This heredity in nature was probably extrapolated to human beings. It must have been thought that such heredity must be working in human beings also. In fact, such extrapolation must have been buttressed by the observations that children do carry the traits of their parents which may include, a variety ranging from mathematical talents to musical skills, besides physical constitution and looks. In fact even today we use expressions such as “There is music in his blood”, “There is acting in his blood” “There is business in his blood “ and so on. These expressions are based on centuries of observations. So every community was seen or conceived as a particular organ or tissue of an organism, which would give rise to specific type of cells.

The second reason for this change must have been due one of the most prevalent concepts viz. KARMA PHALA SIDDHANTA. In Marathi this is expressed as KARAVE TASE BHARAVE. In English this is expressed through “As you sow, so you reap”.

This concept gives a basis for why a particular child is born in a particular community or caste. This led to the notion that those who are born in a particular caste are born according their deeds in the past life. This lent a conceptual foundation for the stability and continuance of the caste dependent job distribution. So every individual was conceived as a particular individual cell in a tissue.

Now it can be appreciated why there were restrictions on all the communities [analogous to organs or tissues] to do a particular job. Obviously this was to achieve social homeostasis [analogous to homeostasis in an organism]. Clearly this was to avoid competition based on petty selfishness and unabated personal ambitions, which could at times, jeopardize the welfare of a society

[analogous to different tissues trying to perform certain functions and thereby endangering the homeostasis and life an organism].

The caste system also had one more and important aspect and that was punishment at local level. This punishment depended on the nature of “crime” or “sin” and the verdict of the traditional beliefs, conventions and consensus. This particular system included [in today’s context totally unjustifiable] the punishment of outcasting.

It is well known in India that the father and mother of the world famous saint of 12th century, saint Jnaneshvar were outcasted and forced to commit suicide because of their “crime” of going against the then prevalent conventions. Those who were outcasted were condemned to live as the outcaste. This system of giving “justice” apparently did not have any provision for the upward traffic of the outcasted “lower” castes, though it must have forced many “upper” castes into “lower” castes because of what was then considered a “crime”. However one does not know with certainty whether there were any ways of absolving from those so called “crimes”. Today these “crimes” may not be considered even mistakes. It appears that these castes which were forced to live outside the villages were declared untouchable. Due to the same notion of heredity, which consolidated caste system, their progeny was also considered inferior and forced to stay out of the village border, was made to accept dirty jobs and were declared untouchable. This is many villages in India used to have and still has in many regions, people staying beyond the boundaries of the village.

The caste system has been primarily a result of all that has been said above, though the influence of other factors such as characteristic social, political, psychological, geographic etc. can not be totally ruled out.

It can be clearly understood from the foregoing that the caste system in India which deteriorated into increasingly unjust and grave perversion was not a conspiracy as is

made out to be by many individuals. The theory that it was a conspiracy can prejudice and mislead the young and innocent people can create division, hatred and strife amongst different castes and can not solve problems of the millions. In fact this has been vindicated by the history of casteinteractions in India of last several decades.

The fact that the caste system did not develop as conspiracy can be clearly evident if following points are considered.

A] Caste system to be conspiracy, has not primarily been a result of political wars or religious wars also. Though the influence of such relationship can not be entirely denied. Political reasons appear too simplistic to explain the phenomenon, which has spread all over India and in every nook and corner of even the interior most aspects of country ruled by extremely different rulers with extremely diverse backgrounds.

B] Caste system to be a conspiracy has not been primarily a result of winner-loser relationship. If that had been the case then there would not have been as many restrictions on certain “upper” castes as have been there in India.

C] If there had been winner loser relationship between two groups then one would have found fairly uniform characteristics amongst “upper” and “lower” castes. This is not so. Everyone would agree that there are people with very low capacity in so called “upper” castes and there are people with far greater capacity in so called “lower” castes. In fact almost all types of people are seen in all the castes.

This applies not only to capacity but also to morality and social commitment.

D] Caste system was not based on equality. But it was basically and to start with not based on inequality, injustice and exploitation also. It was based on as is said earlier the interpretation of homeostasis, heredity and complementarity, social harmony, stability, order and

well being.

It has to be appreciated that because of this, even as most of the saints did not practice caste discrimination, religious discrimination or any kind of discrimination for that matter, they did not condemn Indian scriptures with codes of conduct for different age groups, different professionals, different members of the family etc such as MANUSMRITI, PARASHAR SMRUTI, VASISHTHA SMRUTI, NARADA SMRUTI and so on. This was because they knew that by condemning them, the old wisdom of social homeostasis would be lost and by supporting and practicing it the exploitative, coercive and inhuman element would be justified and would continue. For this reason they chose the middle way. The saints did not make any disruptive and provoking statements because they knew that this was not the solution to the evils of caste system. They knew that the solution to the evils of caste system lied in the opening of the floodgates of enlightenment for one and all. This is why, without making any stunts and gimmicks they spent their lives in trying to open the floodgates of enlightenment for one and all. They suffered during their lifetime because of the harassment from callous, rigid, orthodox and inhuman conservative elements and centuries after their death continue to be misunderstood, misquoted, condemned and ridiculed by many.

One does not know with certainty but from the work of the saints it appears that the saints did see a major flaw and end of caste system [without losing the essential concept of social homeostasis] through generalized enlightenment irrespective of caste, religion, region etc. Appreciating this major flaw and rectifying it is of paramount importance in really annihilating the castes even today.

The major flaw in the caste system that rendered it extremely exploitative, coercive and inhuman is the fact that mango, coconut, tiger and cat do not have the choice and freedom to transcend their mango-ness, coconut-ness, tiger-ness and cat-ness. In contrast human beings

have this potential and hence must get choice and freedom to transcend their caste characteristics, the process which is called enlightenment or self-realization. The saints also seem to have realized that the children are not of the parents [to get exactly the same characteristics or to be blamed for the “sins” of their parents], but they come through the parents. The saints also seem to have realized that it is a great fallacy to condemn some one as sinful because of being born in a particular caste, punish him/her for the so called sins and so called crimes of the past generations or past lives.

The purpose of this chapter is not to glorify or to condemn anybody, or to describe the detailed history of caste system but to conceptualize the main determinants of caste system and thereby take it to its logical end. This implies that everything coercive in caste system comes to an end and the wisdom continues.

This is because, we must remember that while destroying the caste system, there are two diseases by which the mankind is likely to be plagued by. These are individualism and superficiality. In the rest of the world where there was no caste system like that in India, these two diseases have played havoc and are continuing to do so. You will appreciate that these two diseases have started plaguing people in India also.

We must learn from the saints the importance of opening the floodgates of self realization to people irrespective of caste, religion etc. and secondly we must prepare an intellectual framework which would evolve laws, rules and conventions by which material conditions conducive to self realization and enlightenment would be actualized. You would appreciate that the suffering of the victims of caste system and the conceptual stress of ours are inseparably linked and can begin to reduce simultaneously if the education system as suggested earlier, is brought into practice, throughout India and world.

With respect to India, it is high time to realize that ad-hoc steps such as reservation policy, free education [of

present nature], concessions, free food, subsidies etc. have benefited financially, a small percentage of downtrodden and will continue to do so. But even if there is 100 percent reservation in parliament, assemblies, jobs, promotions, admissions to different courses and for that matter, in every possible field, it will never solve the problems of majority of the suffering billions.



CHAPTER 23

EMPLOYEES-EMPLOYER RELATIONS

Quite a lot has been written on the relationship between employers and the employees. In today's world this relationship is found to vary from company to mill, village to city, public sector to private sector, farm laborers to quarry workers and from contract labor to permanent employees with their respective employers. In short class division as well as the caste distinction have blurred considerably.

The working class has become quite heterogeneous. Thus the priorities and interests of different groups of workers differ because a particular policy simultaneously benefits some sections of working class and harms the interests of the other sections. This is especially evident in case of working class of affluent countries and that of developing countries. The financial benefits tend to go to the working class of affluent countries at the cost of working class of the developing countries.

These facts however, are either ignored, neglected,

unnoticed or unattended to. Because of this, the movements of the working class have not been able to succeed adequately in making the society more just though working class conditions have improved to some extent. The working class movements have not been able to equip themselves with the power of enlightenment and therefore, lack in fundamental sense of unity so much required in their policies, strategies and the definition and selection of issues for struggle. This has resulted into considerable reduction in the strength of the working class and their movements, all over the world.

This is largely because they have not adequately developed their strategies on the background of the vision of nonsectarian global welfare. This is possibly because of their inadequate insight or misconceptions about VEDANTIC philosophy. On the one hand irresponsible and cancerous growth of consumerism [at the cost of others] has taken place and on the other there is pathetic and helpless poverty and exploitation.

The moral and spiritual degeneration has been enormous and perpetuating.

The solution to this can come with global perspective, which can result from Namasmaraṇa, which according to great seers can free the society divided into classes into truly unified and classless society. This can be understood if one understands that it is the inner unity when and if unraveled that can lead to external unity envisaged in the concepts of the classless society. But mere attempt of extinction or annihilation of class can not help any class.

Whether a person is a union leader or a sanitary worker the practice of Namasmaraṇa as experienced by many can almost certainly open new avenues of development in their fields which are vital for accurate thoughts and actions. The opportunist and selfish pursuit or materialistic considerations of the present leadership of establishment as well as working class and the sense of helplessness and apathy of the land-less laborers, child laborers

and such others, has to be overcome. Namasmaraṇa as preached for centuries can be compared to light, which is indispensable irrespective of the types of residence (a palace, a bungalow or a hut). It seems to have the capacity to endow the cultural profundity which in itself is an effective and powerful weapon that can be used by those interested in true welfare of the mankind irrespective of whether they belong to the side of employers or employees and make them invincible.

This can be realized more fully by the practice of Namasmaraṇa and not otherwise. Intellectually however one can imagine how by Namasmaraṇa one can become more objective, and thereby more beneficial to greater sections of society and how thereby one can gain undefeatable strength in his efforts to free himself as well as the ailing mankind both materially and spiritually.



CHAPTER 24

STRIKES IN PUBLIC HOSPITALS IN INDIA

Since the strikes affect most of us, it is essential to find out the root causes of the strikes and try to deal with them. This is one of the intellectual measures of stress management and benefits an individual. Though it is true that strikes occur for various reasons and from time to time, those, which occur in public hospitals, have a specific cause that can be detected and treated.

The cause of strikes in public hospitals is the prevalence of the two concepts on which these institutions work. These concepts are, free medical care and economic dependence of these institutions on the government revenue and donations.

FREE MEDICAL CARE

The free medical care gives rise to parasitism, beggarly tendency, meekness and irresponsibility towards personal and public health amongst the patients.

The free medical care creates a special and extremely

avorable situation and golden opportunity for the powerful, rich and famous individuals to exploit the government revenue and tax payers' money.

The free medical care leads to zero returns and subsequent deterioration in the facilities given to patients and employees.

The free medical care associated with perpetual absence of returns leads to unjustifiably low salaries, delay in filling the vacancies, delay in promotions. This state of affairs demoralizes the sincere and dedicated employees and promotes irresponsibility, lethargy, absenteeism, corruption etc. amongst the employees who are not paid properly due to [inadequate returns due to free services].

ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE OF THESE INSTITUTIONS ON THE GOVERNMENT REVENUE AND DONATIONS

The public hospitals are not self-sufficient and do not have any productive/commercial projects to support them. Naturally since there are no returns either from patients or from any other source, for what is spent, the public hospitals are always in loss.

This has lead to inadequate progress in terms of inadequate facilities, inadequate salaries, inadequate employment in terms of number of employees in almost every category, protracted duty hours, worsening working conditions, worsening of staying conditions for the employees and crowding of patients due to huge patients/employee ratio.

All these factors have lead to deterioration of the quality of medical care. In fact because of this a large number of lower middle class and even poor patients turn to private practitioners, consultants and hospitals.

This deterioration can be overcome by trying to make the public hospitals self-sufficient. For this, the concept of free medical care has to be revised and productive/commercial activities are undertaken.

It is high time that the public hospitals are not run on FREE BASIS. This would bring adequate revenue to

ensure progress in terms of adequate facilities, adequate salaries, appropriate employment which could ensure normal duty hours, improvement in working conditions, improvement in staying conditions for the employees and preventing excessive and many times [because the services are free] unnecessary crowding of patients. The patients should have to pay for the medical service they get.

One may raise the objection that this is difficult to implement in case of very poor, helpless, unsupported patients. It is very true no sensitive and sensible individual would think of doing it as well. These patients who are in agonies, in emergencies, or helpless etc. should be made exception and a separate arrangement can be made for them. But in most other cases the problem can be overcome by making provision for payment through “services” or soft loans.

Another way to make the public hospitals self-sufficient is by buttressing them with productive / commercial projects. One can think of more innovative plans as well.

This is important because:

A] It would inculcate a sense of responsibility towards one’s own health, towards public funds, towards public services, amongst the patients.

B] It would generate the sense of accountability, satisfaction and fulfillment amongst the employees

C] It would ensure optimal progress in medical care

D] It would improve the lives of patients as well as employees

E] It would make the revenue hitherto squandered on free medical care available for other developmental work thereby facilitating national progress.



CHAPTER 25

CONCEPT OF FUNCTIONING OF A MUNICIPAL BODY

THE STORY OF A HEN WE HAVE HEARD
IT USED TO GIVE EGGS, WHICH WERE OF GOLD
ITS GREEDY OWNER KILLED THE HEN
AND HE REPENTED FOREVER, IN VEIN.

The moral of the story is that, if we do not care for an institution or the city, on which our own as well as that of others' survival is dependent, then it is suicidal besides leaving behind abyss for our future generations.

Let those, who are adopting helpless attitude of witnessing, as well as those, who are in the frenzy of amassing wealth for their own children realize, that it would be a hell in which their children would have to live in. This is because whether rich or poor everyone citizen would be leaving in the hell of pollution, grave infectious diseases, dangerous diseases of life style, perversions such as cheating, frauds, violence in different forms and a variety heinous crimes born out of the pettiness-the legacy

they get from their parents. In addition there would be many more other evils disrupting the whole social, family and individual life.

We i.e. administrators, employees, union leaders, general public and political leaders-if do not take cognizance of this and do not act promptly and appropriately then our future generations will never forgive us.

As administrators we should be clear in our concepts of holistic health and try to impart it to our people. This necessitates avoiding two extremes, viz. mercenary and corrupt transactions and totally free service.

One has to understand here the difference between charitable, professional, commercial, mercenary and corrupt.

Selfless services given to people are generally considered charitable. Without going into the depth of this it has to be accepted that such selflessness presupposes existence of institutions which would sustain such selflessness. Even the freedom struggle was sustained by many institutions private and public as well as individuals.

However, today honest charity has come in peril because of the onslaught of vested interests. The purpose of honest charity is usually defeated by vested interests. This is especially evident in squandering of money under the garb of charity, involved in subsidy, free services etc. This kind of squandering public money is disastrous to the well being of the MC and the people, honest taxpayers, who live under its jurisdiction and those benefited [in whom disastrous beggarly, irresponsible and parasitic attitude is developed].

Professional activity presupposes honest service and commensurate compensation. Commercial activity involves provision of quality goods or services in a commercial set up that involves proportionate profit or commission. In both of these there are certain codes of conduct or conventions which are observed and they are beneficial to both parties and hence generally not

detrimental to the society.

Mercenary activity involves transactions within legal framework but involve mere and disproportionate profits at the cost of customer and the people. Corruption involves transactions, which are illegal and detrimental to those, who indulge in it [as they get dehumanized by killing the humane element within themselves], to the institution and the people working in it [as their welfare come in peril] and the people whose development suffers.

At present the municipal corporations [MC] are running hospitals, schools, colleges, medical colleges and is maintaining gardens and many other tourist spots etc at the cost of taxpayers.

MC should adopt professional and hence truly benevolent approach and immediately start charging at least nominal fees for providing services and/or goods. This is not merely for getting revenue but for nurturing the sense of responsibility and understanding towards the value of services for which somebody pays. It must be appreciated that the well being of hospitals, medical colleges, municipal schools, offices, tourists spots such as gardens, caves, museums, zoos etc do not merely suffers because of the free-ship but actually leads to corruption, illicit and unlawful activities and so on. One need not make a list of examples here as it can become obvious even if one considers the maintenance of hospitals, colleges, schools offices etc. and tourist spots such as caves, museums, gardens and zoos [which have become plagued with unlawful activities]. It has to be appreciated that the sickening of these institutions leads to cancerous growth of elements, which are commercial, mercenary or corrupt in nature.

The revenue from this should be utilized in improvement in all these institutions, the employees, the plants and the animals therein as well as the people in general.

The concept of professionalism also includes incorporation professional element in running these

institutions. Thus, the schools, colleges, libraries, offices and any other buildings wherever feasible, should be made available for professional and even commercial use on non-working days and also at nights. This can get more revenue as well as generate more jobs.

The incorporation of professionalism in running these institutions also involves understanding and introducing element of production in maximum number of jobs, which are involved in mere paper work or any other type of nonproductive work. There are many departments in MC, which are totally unproductive [and consume tremendous revenue making it impossible in time to come, to fill vacancies, give incentives such as bonus and make new employment].

It is essential that some attitudinal changes be also adopted in this process.

As administrators we must get rid of sense of insecurity, fear, cynicism and despair.

We must try and convince the people concerned about the policies, plans and administrative strategies, which will be in the interest of society and the MC. It is also essential to stop praising us on the basis of petty achievements [while neglecting major failures] and giving excuses.

As employees, It is high time that we learn our role in the development and welfare of the society and our responsibilities towards it and become irresponsible, irregular, accountable, sincere and so on. Because this makes us lose the public sympathy which is so much essential for fighting against injustice. We should be interested in our own well being as well as that of the institutions, on which our survival depends. We should not get lured by mere shortterm economic gains, which are usually at the cost of the departments of MC in which we work, people and us.

As union leaders we must learn that we do not choose the easiest way of luring the employees with short-term economic gains, merely for our survival in view of the

rabid competition in this field with respect to which union leader can give more short term economic gains. We must do our duty towards the employees in terms of giving them the education of politics and their role in a broad political scenario and broaden their vision, which is otherwise likely to become tubular and petty. Whether we like or not this pettiness breeds indifference towards national, social and even regional interests. This vision is either directly or indirectly responsible for success of movements nurturing casteism, sectarianism, religious fanaticism and so on. It is this fact which has made the labor movements unpopular and in most instances ineffective and unsuccessful on the one hand and successful but damaging to others on the other. We as union leaders if continue to do this, then one day may find ourselves in deep trouble. The employees and their generations to come besides the general public are going to blame us forever. Our leadership of course would come to a humiliating end without fail!

As general public we are too much engrossed in our own problems that the problems of the city appear beyond our reach. In some cases it is true. But in general we must learn to voice our opinion and as far as possible studied opinion about public and social issues [and not remain interested only in public issues!]. We must realize the importance our contribution towards the decay and death or growth and prosperity of the society we live in and the city and its administration viz. MC, which has sustained us. We must participate in the cleanliness of the city and its environment.

As political leaders we should not remain biased and nurture the vested interests of our voters and those patronizing us. This jeopardizes the developmental activities. Partisan interest can be overcome if one resolves to do so. Seeking proper advice for inner growth and our own holistic health is one way of doing this.

SECTION IV
CONCEPTS OF ABSTRACT NATURE



CHAPTER 26

IS IT TRUE THAT KARMAPHALASIDDHANTA, JUSTIFIES INJUSTICE, EXPLOITATION AND INEQUALITY?

Let us try to understand KARMAPHALASIDDHANTA properly then decide whether it justifies injustice, exploitation and inequality and whether it is valid today or not.

It is essential to appreciate why it is criticized severely and is not quite popular today. The possible reasons for this are as follows.

A] First thing is that our ego prevents us from accepting or agreeing with KARMAPHALASIDDHANTA is that such acceptance appears to it amount to a) accepting the present situation [PHALA] even if it is unpleasant and b) accepting the link between or cause and effect relationship between the present unpleasant situation and our past (mis)deeds, referred to as KARMA. Obviously this is because we do not want our misfortune to be theoretically justified on the basis of our faults or misdeeds as we find it insulting! Isn't it true that our usual unspoken sentiment is that we are always immaculate, accurate, righteous and virtuous?

Even when we “accept” our faults, it is only because we need a face of modesty for gaining social acceptability!

B] This is also because the effect i.e. PHALA does not follow the KARMA immediately and hence does not fit in the usual concept of cause and effect. The relationship between KARMA and PHALA is not as simple as a chemical reaction between hydrochloric acid and sodium hydroxide. Therefore it is not easily comprehensible and predictable. But the discerning readers would appreciate that all the effects need not follow the causes immediately. In clinical medicine it is not at all unusual to find that many times there is a gap of several years between the cause of a disease and its manifestations. There are many genetic disorders, which manifest several years after the birth even when their causes are present in the genes right from the time of conception!

C] The third reason why this concept does not appear to be acceptable is because of our own kindness. It is painful for us to see social evils such as diseases, poverty, crimes and such many things in society. We feel that everybody should be happy. We find it difficult to digest the fact that some people suffer throughout and some seem to always enjoy. This is especially so when we find that those who are good hearted persons according to us are seen suffering in life, whereas as those who are rogues according to us appear to enjoy! This disturbs us and we start feeling that KARMA PHALA concept is a baseless justification of status quo. Obviously this is because we do not know the link between KARMA and PHALA.

D] Fourth reason is that when we get emotionally charged, we immediately get attracted to the concept of equality either on our own or because of the propaganda done by, a variety of self-styled conscience keepers of the society. The propaganda is so powerful that we are unable to see the fallacy in the concept. We start believing blindly that there are only two choices viz. equality and inequality. We forget that there had never been equality in the past and there is no equality anywhere in the world

even today.

We do not understand that there can not be equality in terms of identical incomes, identical houses, identical jobs etc. We do not realize that just as artificially imposed discrimination and hence inequality is cruel and barbaric, arbitrary insistence for such equality is absurd and fanatic. We do not understand that though discrimination is demonic, differences are not. We do not appreciate that beyond equality and inequality there is a third and wiser concept viz. harmony. Hence unity in diversity and harmony in the different groups is natural and desirable. Just as every tree in universe is different and the insistence that they should be same is irrational, in the same way insistence on the equality of every individual is unreasonable. We do not appreciate that opportunities of education, careers and material progress should be abundant and opportunities of enlightenment to choose socially and individually beneficial opportunity should also be abundant! But this requires transcending the hypocritically perpetuated of concept of equality and cruel practice of inequality.

KARMAPHALASIDDHANTA is a law that links millions of different events in the space and time. It therefore also gives an idea about the characteristic and unique though not intelligible in terms of details, link of events intrinsic to every person's life, which is different from that of the others! Every one of has a unique place in universe. KARMAPHALASIDDHANTA is nothing else but appreciation of the fact that everyone is unique.

Having said this, what do we do about the suffering in the society? Should we witness it indolently and callously?

No. It has to be appreciated that even as every individual life is unique availability of time, earth, water, food, growth, reproduction are common features to every living being. Similarly even as every one of us is different yet everyone requires must get a chance to grow, healthily in every possible way! In short, even as we concede the

KARMAPHALASIDDHANTA, it does not mean that we sit idle, but we make endeavors for the empowerment, growth and progress of everyone in his/her own unique way.

In fact KARMAPHALASIDDHANTA teaches us to accept our responsibility for the pleasures and pains in our lives as well as concede and respect every individual life as unique and respect it. This in contrast to developing patronizing, condescending attitude and feelings such as pity, mercy on the one hand and feelings such disgust, hatred, condemnation etc on the other.

It teaches us to try to promote policies, plans, programs etc. which would benefit everyone in terms of prosperity, profundity and real empowerment, growth and progress.

Thus KARMAPHALASIDDHANTA teaches us to look at life [ours as well as that of the others] as it is and appreciate and concede the uniqueness and thereby helps us to overcome tendencies to make designs, plans and programs based on short sight and inadequate grasp of life, for our life and that of the of the others. In fact this gives us strength to overcome disturbance arising out of the discrepancy between our subjective and hence deficient schemes and the objective reality. We learn to accept the reality and act on it according to our unique capabilities.

This can become clear from the fact that I am writing this i.e. present situation [PHALA] as a result of my characteristic efforts in past [KARMA] and many are doing other things [PHALA] according to their past [KARMA]. You are reading this [PHALA] according to your past [KARMA]!

So every one of us is unique and hence deserves unconditional respect and love. Hence prophets, visionaries, saints shower everyone of us-even the criminals- the sinners, with profound love and blessings.



CHAPTER 27

CONCEPTS OF SUPERSTITION, FAITH AND RATIONALITY

It appears that everywhere in the world there are believers and nonbelievers. These words obviously relate to belief in God. Belief in God may be branded as superstition by some nonbelievers and the believers may brand non-belief in God as heretic. Actually belief or non-belief in God are subjective perceptions of individuals. Moreover they do not determine the course of life of an individual. Thus a person can be paranoid and criminal even if he/she calls himself/herself believer and a person can be decent even if he/she says that he/she is a nonbeliever. Therefore in most cases such belief or non-belief in itself does not guarantee good or bad behavior and hence it is always better to grant the others the privilege to either believe or not believe in God.

But there are instances when the nature of belief (or so-called non-belief, because while proclaiming non-belief actually belief in the nonexistence of God is proclaimed!) becomes fanatic and even antisocial. It is in such

circumstances that there manifests criminal intolerance towards the opinion of the others. Such fanaticism usually thrives on superstition. The superstition is nothing else but unreasonable, unrealistic and adamant belief in a particular phenomenon even when the opposite of it is objectively proved, repeatedly and in several places.

The belief as well as the non belief, assume the dimension of a superstition, when the belief of the believers and the non belief of the nonbelievers (which is actually belief in their petty self or the petty self of their leader) lead to killing of the others. The believers as well as non-believers in such circumstances are actually engaged in capitalizing on the weakness of a common man. The nature of activities of the fanatic believers as well as nonbelievers is always mean, deceptive, full of ulterior motives and dictatorial and demeaning the people.

It is interesting to note that in the case of fanatic believers as well as non-believers it may assume formation of terrorist groups. It may take the form of false propaganda. It may take the form of deification of an ordinary charlatan in case of believers and extreme glorification of a political leader in the nonbelievers. It may take a form of selling false miracles, promises and forecasts in the case of believers and it may take the form of selling “make believe dreams” in the case of nonbelievers.

It can be appreciated from the foregoing that superstitions are born in maniacal and petty minds and thrive on the petty and weak minds. They are not restricted to any religion, cult, party, organization constituted by believers or nonbelievers alone.

While thinking about belief and non-belief it is interesting to note that most of our activities are knowingly or unknowingly centered around faith.

Thus, there is faith in our mind about our parents, our children, our relatives, our acquaintances, our teachers, our doctors and so on and so forth. In fact large section of our life is based on and determined by faith or belief. So let

us (whether we are believers or nonbelievers) understand what this word faith or belief meant to most of the religions. This may help us to be tolerant and save us from going to the stage of superstitiousness and fanaticism.

Traditionally total faith either in God or in the 'Guru' is equivalent to total submission of ego or total surrender of one's petty self. This submission reduces the unleashing of one's petty self. In today's times there is always a possibility that non-belief as well as belief may actually be devotion to the petty ego of one's own or that of another. This can prove to be selfish and exploitative on the one hand and damaging or destructive on the other. Hence in view of paucity of reliable counseling or gurus, it is better to believe in no body and instead choose NAMASMARAN or name of a God so that one can develop a thought anchor and gradually learn to overcome one's petty ego and thereby selfishness and foolishness. Thus we can overcome the maniacal petty traits and also the petty and weak traits within us as well as others ourselves and thereby protect and save oneself and also the others from the menace of superstitiousness and fanaticism.

In general one can roughly observe three stages with respect to development of an individual in terms of faith.

The first stage is that of ignorance. In this stage, the person, his thoughts and his actions are centered around his petty self and flow automatically in total lack of awareness of one's true self. This stage is in one sense that of child like innocence and not that of malice and viciousness.

The second stage is beginning of awareness of one's true self in terms of love and compassion for the others and the petty self in terms of sexual passion, lust for power etc. This is associated with struggle between the two elements classified as divine and devilish or godly and demonic.

This stage may be associated with certain norms, conventions, precepts and practices such as worship,

chanting the name of God etc to struggle for rights of the downtrodden, independence struggles etc which promote divinity and to contain the petty self as against those which promote the unleashing of the petty self, such as exploitation, riots, looting, drug peddling, terrorism etc!

The third stage is that of efforts to realize the aphorism that essence of the universe and the essence of an individual are united and continuous. One begins to try to experience the merger in the ocean of love with eternal life. One tends to verify whether the Namasmaraṇa i.e. remembering the name of God takes us from the firm illusion of transient fragmented disunity to the realization of the eternal reality which unites and “governs” the universe.

Having said this much about faith and superstition, let us understand the meaning of rationalism and its importance, scope and limitation.

The development of analytical thinking, the pursuit of intellectual verification, the passion for intellectual conceptualization, the advent of accumulation of factual information etc. have benefited the mankind tremendously. This understanding is important in stress management also. We can understand this by an example.

Imagine swimming pool, with a facility of a nice diving board. Imagine beautiful steps to reach that diving board. Imagine that you can not swim unless you dive! Now, swimming in the pool after diving wonderfully and enjoying it is like managing stress. The steps to reach that diving board are like rationality or intelligence. Those of us who do not climb the steps obviously cannot swim. Irrationality and blind belief are hurdles in the management of stress.

Similarly those who climb the steps and reach the diving board, but do not jump from it can also not swim. Getting imprisoned in intellectual framework or one's rationality [without realizing that it has its own limitations] is being blind to millions of possibilities which are beyond the range one's own intelligence and hence also can act as a

hurdle in stress management.

Climbing the steps, reaching the diving board and jumping from it [getting freed from the enslaving shackles of one's own paradigms and intellectual frames], help one efficiently manage the stress!!

For getting this point it is important to appreciate the difference between being rational and rationalist.

Being rational, as everyone understands is making intellectual efforts to unravel the truth while simultaneously conceding the scope and limitations of the methodology. Being rational involves awareness about one's limitations. Because, it is a fact that there are limitations, to the capacity, of the human neurophysiology

Being rationalist is (as far as I understand) harboring the belief that everything in life must be governed in what that person feels is rational. Rationalist seems to forget that lot of things are quite irrational and yet extremely beautiful and valuable aspects of human civilization. Take for example the unbounded love defying all rationality between Romeo and Juliet. Rationalist (again, as far as I understand) appears to denigrate or at least disapprove, human transactions, which have instinctual basis, emotional basis and intuitive basis.

One of the classical examples is that of the faith between a wife and husband. In absence of such faith the wife or the husband would have to provide the partner with proof, evidence, witness etc for her or his all day to day activities.

I am sure that rationalist are in most instances driven by their conscience and are very humane. But I am trying to voice the flaw in their assumptions.

In nutshell, rationality has obviously contributed to the development of human civilization. But even the rationalist thinking also has done a very good job when it comes to opposing the crass superstitions (conducive to cheating and exploitation). But rationalistic approach has the potential to contribute to disintegration of interpersonal

faith and trust. In the process of being inquisitive about facts and principles governing them, we ought not to get carried away by rationalistic frenzy, which can make us skeptical and suspicious about the finest of reality viz. the intrinsic unity of mankind. Rationalist frenzy can lead to misconceptions about the traditional practices such as Namasmaraṇa. Imprisonment in one's intellect can lead to suicidal notions that Namasmaraṇa is an intellectual liability. Such thing is possible because of cancerous growth of unenlightened intellectual process.

Traditional practice of Namasmaraṇa has the potential (as repeatedly taught by the seers) to enrich us with the strength and wisdom to develop and use all our faculties including intellectual in a healthy and socially as well as individually beneficial manner.



CHAPTER 28

IS IT USEFUL TO FIND OUT THE DEGREE OF PLEASURE OR SADNESS

Yes. It is quite a useful thing to do.

This is because the quality of life can be improved and happiness in life can be multiplied by this simple endeavor. This is how we can actually experience it.

Most of us experience boredom, depression, restlessness, vacuum, sense of loss, sense of having wasted life and so on. This is because we are not satisfied with our achievements. We feel that that we have not lived to the best of our own expectations and of those whom we love and respect.

But this stage which comes sometime around the age of forty five and many time corresponds to the age of menopause [cessation of monthly cycle] in women can be over-come or prevented by learning to find out the degree of pleasure or sadness in any given activity that we do.

We can find out the degree of pleasure or sadness from its intensity, its duration and its impact on the

surrounding society.

Thus small things such a tasty dish gives pleasure but it lasts for a short time, its intensity has its own limits and its influence on the society is minimal. In childhood we enjoy these things and that is quite normal. [But if we see a middle age mother or a father, fighting for a chocolate or ice cream with children, we would surely feel that it is abnormal!]

Compare this activity with a discovery of a vaccine or a socially beneficial concept. The intensity would be tremendous, duration would be spreading over years and influence could be on millions.

As and when we grow, we gradually and intuitively learn to find out the degree of pleasure. This is also called as acculturation or getting cultured. In fact the quality of our life can be easily judged by the aim that we have and the aim in turn depends upon our ability to find out the degree of pleasure or pain in a given activity. This is because de-pending on our capacity to find out the degree or pleasure or pain in a given activity we can decide our priority.

Decision about priority is extremely important in every walk of life. Take for example a case of an administrator and his administrative achievements. I remember a collector achieving such a feat in the form of paying pension and provident fund in minimum time. I am sure the degree of pleasure, which this gentleman would get at the end of his career would be tremendous, besides his life being exemplary for the posterity. This is called prioritization. This helps you to do the most important things with priority first and the least important at last.

You may ask a question at this juncture. Is it not important to know one's abilities? Is it not inadequate to know merely what might give maximum pleasure?

This is really an important question.

It is really important to know one's abilities.

You can come to now what you are good at sometimes

on your own by intuition. But if not most, at least in some it may become necessary to get good guidance in this respect. This guidance can be availed by two ways. Either by what are called aptitude tests or by actually trying your hand at some things, which you think, you are good at. The important point is giving your best to the society and get in return the best in terms of satisfaction, money and power.

Once a thought or a feeling or an action is judged as objective and of TOP PRIORITY, then it becomes easy to ASSERT oneself rather than imposing and getting imposed.

IN WHAT WAY DOES ASSERTION HELP?

With rise of INDIVIDUALISM AND CONCEPT OF DEMOCRACY it is pertinent to evolve these concepts or else individualism can turn into petty and morbid selfishness and democracy can turn into worst kind of anarchy and mobocracy.

To evolve individualism and democracy to their logical culminations viz. self-realization/actualization and enlightened participatory progress respectively assertion is essential. Individualism and democracy can be healthy and beneficial, only if there is, well developed ability TO ASSERT ONESELF AND COMMUNICATE. Thus, INTROSPECTION, PRIORITIZATION, POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE REINFORCEMENT AND WELLNESS CYCLE HELP you to PARTICIPATE IN SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION. The nature of assertion in this situation is that of addressing social problems with PROPER COGNITION, PROPER AFFECT AND PROPER CONATION!

This can be extended to many pleasures in life and then we can understand what difference it can make if we learn to find out the degree of pleasures and our priorities in life. This would be even clear if we appreciate that most of the times there are clashes and bitterness in families, parties, groups and even nations on relatively small issues. By learning to find out the degree of

pleasure and determining our aims and our priorities we can significantly reduce the areas of conflicts and live more peacefully and harmoniously. You can apply exactly opposite yardsticks to find out what makes you sad and guilty. The next logical step is that of POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE REINFORCEMENT. Once we decide our priorities and learn to assert ourselves, it is a great deal of relief and our suffocation or our depression is significantly reduced. This relief has to be reinforced. Therefore try to remember the thought, the feeling and the action that gave you happiness of maximum intensity, maximum duration and that simultaneously benefited others. Relive it. This would help you CONSOLIDATE your priorities, [POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT].

Do this exercise with respect to thoughts, feelings and actions, which gave maximum sadness lasting for maximum duration and hurting or inflicting others. This would help you to avoid with CONVICTION, what you would like to avoid on priority basis [NEGATIVE REINFORCEMENT].

The stress involves a) stressors, b) perception, cognition or appraisal of the stressor, c) feelings or affect resulting from that appraisal, the change in the internal environment and d) the response of the individual in terms of behavior [depending on physical, psychological, intellectual and spiritual capabilities of an individual, learning, social circumstances, financial situation, religious guidance, spiritual solace, entertainment, love, family support, medical help and such several factors].

All the effects of stressors on cognition, affect and response in turn can act as stressors and this can result into a vicious cycle called DISTRESS CYCLE.

However if our children and we understand the foregoing, then WELLNESS CYCLE can be established.

Thus when we regularly practice evaluation of the degree of pleasure and sadness priority assertion and positive and negative reinforcement the wellness cycle i.e.

positive and beneficial effect on your health [increased intellectual capacity, happiness, healthy instincts and satisfactory physical activities] begins and the vicious cycle or distress cycle of negative or deleterious effects on you health start disappearing.

If we train our children right from the beginning into this area, then their lives would be surely more magnanimous and fulfilling.

It is important to appreciate that if our children and we do not know this, DISTRESS CYCLE can set in and our lives can be miserable. To understand distress cycle following sequence has to be understood.



CHAPTER 29

WE ARE TAUGHT TO OBEY. BUT IS IT ALWAYS CORRECT TO OBEY BLINDLY?

It is true that traditionally obedience, even blind obedience has many times been upheld as a virtue.

The story of Parashuram who went to the extent of killing his mother to obey his father's order is famous.

If we give careful thought to find out the basis underlying the concept of the obedience, then it would help us to get the best and reject the rest from the past.

If we observe carefully then we come across the concept of DHARMA in Indian culture.

DHARMA refers to different "roles" for different family members from the family as well as different groups in the society. These roles are to be performed by these different individuals. The roles are complimentary and in harmony.

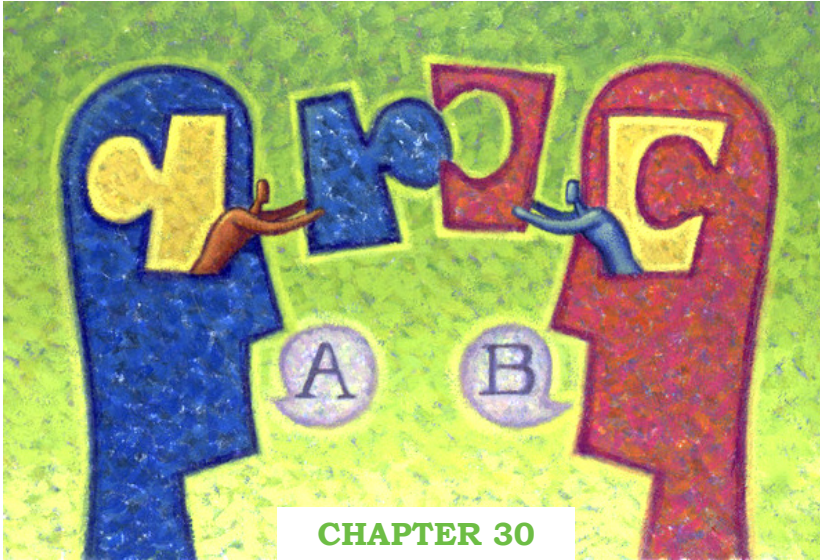
The concept of blind obedience is based on the fact that majority of us are likely to be disobedient out of petty selfishness and ignorance. This fact may not be palatable

to most of us because of our inflated ego, but it is true. The scriptures in Indian culture were developed over a period of thousands of years and by selfless individuals. Their aim was to ensure social harmony, order and progress. It was accepted by consensus by most of the thinking and selfless people.

But in today's context and on the background that the noble Indian traditions and the rich treasures of knowledge were mutilated physically as well by misinterpretation by the invaders from time to time the principle of blind obedience has no place in our day to day life. In fact it can prove counterproductive. But at the same time the fear that most of us can be driven by our petty selfishness and inflated egos is still real and hence blind disobedience, which is many time glorified as revolutionary, path breaking, extraordinary, progressive etc. has also no place in today's life and is likely to prove dangerous.

However blind obedience and blind disobedience have some role to play even today as for example in some organizations and some fields. Thus blind obedience has a limited scope in organizations such as army which have a specific kind of task. Blind disobedience also has limited scope in such fields where brain storming is essential e.g. scientific fields or in the beginning of learning to inculcate intellectual rectitude and intellectual boldness.

But by and large, it is better to evolve the concept of en-lightened obedience where, one carefully listens, asks questions, accepts provisionally, experiments, verifies and then after working on it thoroughly, accepts or rejects a particular concept with clear understanding that in future it could be rejected or accepted respectively.



CHAPTER 30 IDEOLOGY

Ideologies, whether religious or otherwise and whether theist or atheist are sets of human conceptions. These conceptions have two aspects. First is that they explain the phenomena in the universe or put forward their views or vision or perspective of the universe. The second aspect born out of this perspective leads to development of a particular design for the society and in accordance adoption of certain recommendations, suggestions, opinions, laws, decrees etc meant for guiding the human behavior.

In the past when there were no ideologies the human behaviors reflected biological instincts. This was similar to the behavior of animals. The characteristic of such behavior is that it is devoid of any deliberate planning and its implementation. In the course of human history the awareness about one's behavior and awareness of ones feelings, instincts, thoughts, desires, dreams etc. went on increasing. The ideologies can be seen to have emerged

as a result of the interactions between these. Like tree of evolution the tree of ideologies also grown in diversity!

The conflict of survival has “evolved” into conflict of interests and ideologies supporting those interests! It has acquired even more complex dimensions with intellectual and technological developments.

Thus not merely the politicians, but the intellectuals, scientists, thinkers, technologists, artists and many others are seen conflicting with explosive passions, violent sentiments and fiercely opposing theories, doctrines etc, with the help of modern gadgetry! This is suicidal for the whole man-kind.

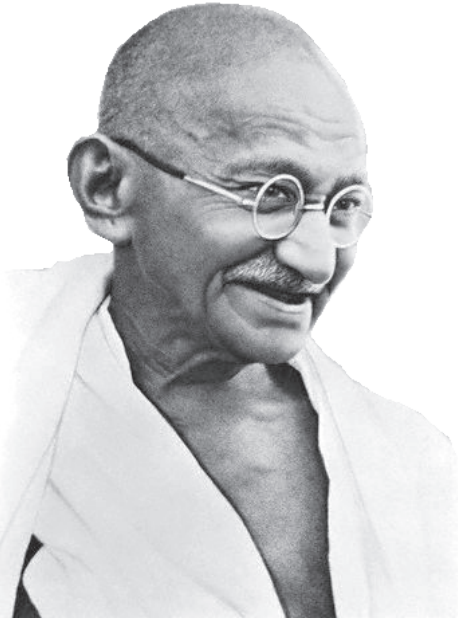
The ascent of man beyond ideology and his grip or control over it is the only solution in the present state that can bring about synthesis of the opposing ideologies and unite their staunch followers. Thus the oppressive dominance of ideologies whether advocating indulgence or suppression, should end but the ideologies as such should remain and flourish. The behavior centered round the enlightenment is always preferable to the ideology based oppressive/oppressed behavior. The ideologies should evolved in the light of self-realization and instead dividing they should unite and instead of governing the mankind they should serve the enlightened mankind. The ideologies have this specific place in which alone they can continue to benefit mankind instead of dictating (and disturbing) it.

It appears that the trans-ideological realm of enlightenment, which is truly democratic, can be set open (as suggested many) for one and all with the key of traditional practice Namasmaraṇa. This realm infuses everyone with new life that promotes natural ennoblement and development, in-stead of imposing patterned and restrictive behavior. Namasmaraṇa is said to set an individual free from his petty self as well as the rule of ideologies or the obsession of imposing it on others. Thus Namasmaraṇa seems to have the capacity to protect us from being the victims of the propaganda of ideological

wars and it saves us from being the criminals responsible for such propaganda of ideological wars. It probably does have the capacity to empower us in such a way that we can defend the victims as well as defeat the criminals of such wars.

Ideologies generate and nurture love for one another in people of same caste, same nation, same race, same religion, same class, same ideology and so on. Sometimes under the disguise of and under the slogans of internationalism and globality, “sectarian love” flourishes and as a logical sequel sectarian wars spread.

It is said by the seers, time and again that the Namasmaran can take us beyond the realm of “sectarian love” and “sectarian hatred” into the realm of true global harmony, true global unity. Thus dictatorial and slavish traits can be over-come and the spontaneous process of self-realization and its expression (true freedom) which helps others too, can begin.



CHAPTER 31 NON VIOLENCE

In general it is agreed upon that nonviolence pertains to avoidance of the actions or thoughts, which may harm or damage other individuals and animals. But even as, apparently majority of people accepts such nonviolence, the society in general is seen indulging in practice of violence in various forms. Violence is in fact glorified also. It is true that certain kind of violence is glorified. But never the less it is violence. Look at the way the war heroes are worshipped. Look at the way Robin Hood image is adored. One should never conclude from this that the society is hypocritical. But in my view, this due to, inadequate understanding and partial acceptance and partial rejection of the concept of nonviolence [equated with nonkilling].

But there two factions

A] those, who accept this concept sincerely and seem to be very keen in propagating vegetarianism, non-killing, non-hurting and so on. They keep trying to avoid the

killing of even the insects, bacteria, viruses, etc.

B] Those who also seem to think sincerely but in conclusion, abandon this concept as impractical and uphold the doctrine of violence as a natural part of personal, political and even religious pursuits.

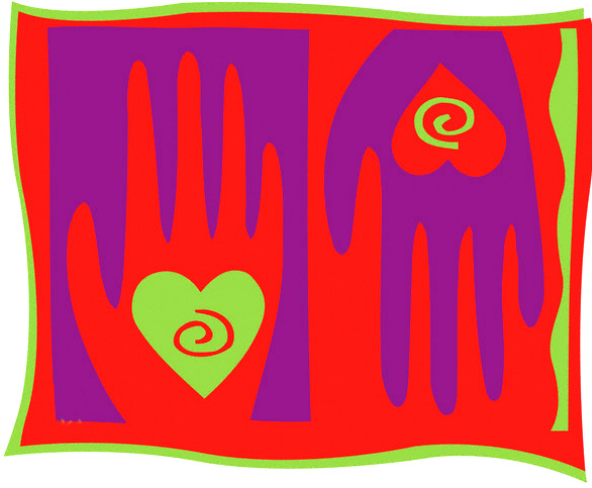
Why is this so? What is the cause of the discrepancy in thought and action? What is cause of prevalence of such extremely opposing views? Is avoidance of the actions or thoughts, which may harm or damage other individuals and animals, an intellectually sound interpretation of concept of nonviolence? Is it possible that wisdom in the concept of nonviolence has remained undiscovered so far?

For getting answers to these questions, it must be appreciated that avoidance of killing is not only impossible but it is unscientific. It is unnatural because it lays emphasis on non-killing. Conceptually this is quite irrational and de-pendent on the assumption that death is an evil and must be avoided. In actuality birth and death are part and parcel of the cosmic panorama. Therefore, just as it is ignorant and cruel to kill someone or to harm someone for personal gains, it is conceptually erroneous [and also ineffective] to attempt to avoid the killing out of subjective [even though sometimes kind and noble] feelings, without going to the root cause of the violence.

The root cause of indiscriminate and barbaric violence is usually born out of pettiness. Petty selfishness, petty feelings, petty [dogmatic, fanatic and oppressive] thinking. It is essential to rise above such pettiness to bring in practice nonviolence. Living in the interest of one's own liberation as well as global liberation is in itself nonviolence. Non violence in other words, constitutes the feelings, thoughts, actions etc. springing out of selfless mind with concern for the welfare of the world. Non violence can also be looked at as the feelings, thoughts and actions born out of totally non-subjective or impersonal considerations.

Non violence, therefore, must be seen as an equivalent

to becoming more and more selfless and more and more objective in one's perspective, thinking and actions. One of the traditional ways of achieving this is practice of Namasmaraṇa. Other methods of self-realization are not considered inferior. However in most of such methods traces or subjective thinking are likely to persist. In other words even if a person conquers killing instincts, sexual desires, the emotional attachment, the desire for possessions and so on and so forth still, some particular idiosyncrasy usually remains and later assumes monstrous dimensions. This is because even a trace of subjective thinking tends to prompt the person to design and dictate arbitrary plans for the rest of the world. Therefore, to avoid this and to allow the cosmic desire to manifest through one's self-less state, vision and deeds the practice of Namasmaraṇa is likely to prove extremely useful.



CHAPTER 32

CONCEPTS OF CHARITY AND SWADHARMA

Most of us usually accept that it is good to be charitable. Because most of us agree that being callous, crude and indifferent to the needs of other people is the lowest stage. This stage neither allows us to grow from within and manage any form of stress healthily, nor does it ensure any development of the society.

Being kind to others is a higher stage. It does make us enriched with emotional fulfillment and helping the others at personal level benefits many people around us. When we help others, it can be either due to affection and love or it can be due to sympathy and mercy. In any case there is noble feeling behind the act. This is why most of the religions have upheld charity.

But the prevalent concept of charity and the Indian concept of DHARMA are different. The prevalent concept of charity is born out of sympathy, mercy and benevolence. There is nothing wrong in it if viewed from the above point of view. But the Indian concept of charity has

something more to offer and hence must be studied and understood.

The Indian concept parallel to charity is usually referred to as DHARMA. It is the sacred duty assigned to different individuals at different stages in their lives, according to their relationships and according their peculiar position in the society. Thus the noble acts are incorporated actually as a part of one's routine life. It is not a matter of individual's feelings or choice but it is expected from an individual as a matter of fulfilling various responsibilities and obligations. These obligations or responsibilities are somewhat akin to loans or debts called RUNA. Thus there are PITRU RUNA (debt of father), MATRU RUNA (debt of mother), SAMAJ RUNA (debt of society) etc. Naturally there is a concept of "repaying these loans". This repayment of loans or fulfillment of social obligations is called DHARMA. Thus there is PUTRA DHARMA (the sacred obligations of a son), MATRU DHARMA (sacred obligations of a mother), PITRU DHARMA (sacred obligation of a father), RAJA DHARMA (sacred obligation or responsibilities of a king) etc. This concept of obligations and their fulfillment used to be prevalent in the different stages of life such as student stage (BRAHMACHARYASHRAMA), married family person's stage (GRUHASTHASHRAMA), retired stage (VANAPRASTHASHRAMA) and stage of renunciation or renunciation (SANYASASRHAMA) and were referred to as ASHRAMAS. Thus a student is expected to observe celibacy and study. This is obviously a wise thing if one considers the menace of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases and the problems of unmarried mothers. The GRUHASTHA or family person had the sacred duty of offering hospitality to a guest (ATITHI) and hence it was said that ATITHI DEVO BHAVA which means a guest is to be treated like God.). The stage of retired life and the stage of renunciation were also characterized by sacred duties.

The importance the concept of DHARMA is that it does not give rise inflation of ego as it usually does in case of charity. The concept of DHARMA is akin to

the role a cell in maintenance of internal environment i. e. homeostasis. Thus just as a cell participates in homeostasis in subservience to health of an organism, similarly an individual participates in social homeostasis in subservience to the health of the society.

Since the fabric of the Indian society has changed almost completely the revival of the old concept exactly in the same form does not seem possible and feasible.

But at the same time it is possible to extract the essence of the concept of DHARMA and practice it. Thus the saints say that it is possible by practice of Namasmaraṇa to develop global perspective, global thinking, global policies and globally beneficial administration and implementation.

Let us consider the practical aspects of charity and DHARMA.

But today, charity in itself, does not suffice. This is because the charity can not affect the roots of the social and political evils in the form of perspectives, policies, plans, administrative machinery, laws, rules, conventions etc. This is a very fundamental phenomenon unnoticed, ignored, neglected or at times deliberately concealed by those of us with vested interests.

Another reason why charity is not sufficient or in fact can prove to be counterproductive is because in many instances donations and sacrifices go waste and in fact become or are misused. In present circumstances, hypocrisy and pettiness are almost always present underneath the façade of charity. Thus charity in such circumstances actually helps the social evils responsible for a variety of social maladies (Antisocial policies, plans, administrative aberrations, laws, rules, conventions etc) to continue to grow.

This is why charity even if it is sincere can not give emotional gratification for any thinking person. Due to this most of us find ourselves suffocated and unable to express our magnanimity.

Look at the queues in front of public hospitals, many

restaurants, temples etc. At one stage of the development of society these signs of diseased (exploited) society could have been inevitable. Charity in those times could have been the only way to give outlet to goodness which otherwise would get suffocated and degenerated.

But today, by understanding our DHARMA i.e. SWADHARMA, and practicing its essence through Namasmaraṇ or any other method, we can rectify our cognition, affect and conation.. Thus for example, a doctor would work for the advent of holistic medicine, a lawyer for laws for holistic education, an educationist for the development of holistic education (which nurtures cognitive, affective, psychomotor and productive domain of a child) and so on, in terms of policy making, planning and implementation

By comprehension and practice of SWADHARMA we can effectively manage the most important, vital and burning problems of problems such as child labor, begging, slums, pavement dwelling, diseases, pollution etc.



CHAPTER 33

WHAT IS SATISFACTORY LIVING?

It is very easy for even a child to know when it is not satisfied. Not only that, it also knows how to express its dissatisfaction! It cries. It throws tantrums. It quarrels. It stops talking. In one way or another, the child expresses itself.

We all also know when we are unsatisfied. But we may not admit that to others, because of shyness or shame. In fact this is why most of us when asked, “How are you” or “How are you doing?” answer that we are fine [even if we are actually not !]. Not only that we learn not to grumble or express our dissatisfaction we also learn to reassure our-selves. So, even when unsatisfied in many respects it is usual for most us to console ourselves by saying that no body is truly happy in the world! No body gets everything he or she wants! So gradually we inculcate this attitude of suppressing and coming to terms in our children also. Many of us reassure themselves by looking at the less fortunate ones and thank God for making them a shade

better!

However let us admit that this kind of reassurance, consolation, suppression, or accepting defeat in life and coming to terms with life does not solve the problem at all.

There are several factors, which cause dissatisfaction. But we are not going to make a list of them because they are too obvious. Moreover brooding on them has counterproductive effect.

In nutshell however it appears that anything that restricts our instincts, emotions, intelligence etc. and makes us help-less, makes our life unsatisfactory. But this is only a partial truth!

Actually as our instincts, emotions and intelligence are not at all definite and constant. They are indistinct, hazy and changing! So at any given time neither fulfillment of our needs, nor their denial, can really satisfy us. Do not we find that many times the children do not stop crying even when their demands (which are also changing) are satisfied?

Many of us have various goals in their lives. These goals may vary from getting first class in their examination, winning over a girl friend, or emancipation of the world.

In any case our mind remains fixed to these goals or dreams. This fixation whether to a magnanimous goal or to a petty one, is intrinsically inaccurate. Hence when failure of dreams as envisioned through our limited and inaccurate perceptions, does not mean our failure. One of the reasons why it has been said that that we should treat the failure and the success with equanimity is this.

So inadequate knowledge about our selves, and changing nature and inaccuracy of our goals are two causes of our dissatisfaction in our lives. Let us try to examine what we are and what are aspirations!

Looking at ourselves from one point of view, our bodies are nothing else but an assembly of about 100 trillion cells. A trillion means 1000 billions. A billion means 1000

mil-lions. A million means 1000 thousands. So these huge number cells and the huge number of complex biochemical and biophysical interactions going on amongst them make us what we are!

But is that all?

No. Mere biochemical and biochemical interactions go on even in plants and animals. What is it that distinguishes us from plants and animals?

Yes. It is a wonderful and dynamic collage of instincts, de-sires, emotions, intelligence, intuitions, dreams, missions and so on which [in addition to all that the plants and animals have] make us what we are. But even that is not enough. In addition to all above, the consciousness of the fact that we have all these facets that makes us what we are.

The one single hallmark of satisfactory life is accurate knowledge of the purpose of life and your efforts to accomplish it and also your accomplishment in that direction.

The purpose of life is to do the best in our field in our own way in the best interest of mankind, be that art, science, philosophy, sports, entertainment, craft or anything for that matter.



CHAPTER 34

FAMILY LIFE

The human beings as well as several animals are characterized by groups of individuals recognized as a family. It is the nature's law and nature's wisdom which has evolved this phenomenon of family [constituted by physical, instinctual emotional, and overall biological complementarity]. Thus, it is quite natural that it is extremely beautiful to see various animals involved in parented care, just as it is very pleasant to see a human mother loving her baby.

Human families have gone through several transitions and at present are on the verge of collapse, in many parts of the world and they are full of stress and strain as well as strife in the other parts of world.

The nature of disturbances in family may vary in details in people with different backgrounds. However, one of the common factors is dissatisfaction resulting out of expectations either from one's own self or from the others. This leads to development of hatred for others or

pity for one-self. Thus, the members of the family tend to be violent either to, others or to themselves. In human society these expectations have acquired the dimensions of traditions, conventions, laws and such other things. However, with increasing complexity in the social dynamics and economic relationships the inadvertent acceptance as well as destruction of conventions, traditions etc. have led to extreme psychological unrest. This has led to various crimes such as feticide, infanticide, child abuse, teenage mothers etc. The hundred percent successful sex education in many countries has not reduced the incidence of all these as well as that of incompatible marriages, divorces etc. On the other hand dowry deaths and such other crimes are rampant in other parts of the world. Neither stereotyped [revival] nor destruction [implicit in so called revolutions] of the traditions and conventions will solve the crises, which the family system is facing world over.

This means the essence of past wisdom has to be extracted from the convention and traditions and in accordance with this essence, appropriate family relationships and conventions of duty towards one another have to emerge. The laws also have to spring from such wisdom with due consideration to the peculiarities of the present day complexities. Thus neither fundamentalist approach can help nor the so-called progressive approach, which is out to destroy the traditions and impose arbitrary rules and laws, can work.

Various saints teach, that the healthy evolution of family life can be possible with the help of Namasmaraṇa, which shows us the innate unity and harmony, thus facilitating healthy development of human bonds. This can evolve the old forms of rules, regulations, conventions and traditions so as to benefit the mankind. Namasmaraṇa thus can loosen the irrational strangle hold of the traditions, conventions as well as the expectations on our minds. In simple words Namasmaraṇa shifts our attention to the innate continuity and unity, already existing in the human hearts. Namasmaraṇa enhances our awareness of

the core reality, the eternal melody and the power that links and governs all of us. This awareness and experience which springs from or springs through the practice of Namasmaraṇa, endows us with considerate outlook on the one hand and the courage to manifest our true self on the other hand. In the present context the members of the family seems to have lost this awareness. This has led to hysterical pampering of one's whims on the one hand and denial of the genuine needs of the others on the other hand. This has also led to an obsessive pursuit of material gains at the cost of others. One can easily see how this has got the potential to blast the harmonious family life into pieces. No other rules, regulations or any arbitrary codes of conduct can save and or rejuvenate the human bonds, which are vital to the vibrant and joyful family life. Namasmaraṇa, by orienting our attention and fixing it on the inner harmony can revitalize and reorganize the family life in a beautiful manner.



CHAPTER 35 MIRACLES

Whenever an individual performs anything which is not possible for the vast majority or anything that can not be explained by known laws of nature then we call such a thing as miracle. Mythologies from most of the parts of the world are full of descriptions of miracles or miraculous feats. Even the spiritual traditions are full of those individuals who, have been said to have performed miracles. There are many accounts, which describe the miracles or wonders of nature.

There has always been a halo of mysteriousness surrounding the miracles. The stories of miracles ignite the flame of curiosity, charge the sense of wonder and sometimes stimulate the obsession to possess miraculous powers. In many individuals the thoughts of miracles culminate into the development of the delusion that they actually possess miraculous powers. Many individuals misuse the sway that the miracles have, on the minds of people and indulge in cheating them, as in the case of

many fraudulent charlatans disguised as demigods. Many individuals subject themselves to the abject exploitation as a result of awe and fear about the miracles. In such cases the miracles do not remain mere entertainers of innocent children. They become truly vicious enemies of mankind.

It must be appreciated that the pursuit of miracles and the pursuit of material gains do not vary in terms of pettiness. Similarly the arrogance born out of miracles does not differ from the arrogance born out of money, in terms of the ignorance and the spiritual void. It also must be realized that the coercion and oppression involved in subjecting others to material powers is not different from the same involved in subjecting the others to the (even if imaginary) powers of miracles. Lastly it must be understood that foolishness and illusion involved in prostrating in front of material powers is in no way different from the same involved in surrendering to the powers of miracle.

It may be clear from the foregoing why the classical spiritual texts condemn the pursuit of miraculous powers [Siddhis]. It must be appreciated that pursuits of such kinds are evident in day to day life and in different fields e.g. intellectual, political, economic, physical and such other powers are sought after incessantly. These have led to a chaotic interaction of otherwise mutually beneficial forces, bringing the human civilization in peril.

Namasmaran, which is advocated by saints, is unique in the sense that it sets aside every kind of petty pursuit and helps the individual to become selfless. Even if an individual starts Namasmaran with an initial purpose of petty gains, later on as he spends time in the practice of Namasmaran, he/she gets freed from that initial, petty pursuit. In short, Namasmaran saves us from the temptation of miracles. This is very important because, if miracles become tools of exploitation, goals of pursuit or objects of worship then they can be as destructive and detrimental as any other petty thing.



CHAPTER 36

THE CONCEPT OF HOLISTIC MEDICINE

WHAT IS THE PRESENT STATE OF MEDICAL FIELD?

A lot has been written about holistic medicine, Several international, national and regional conferences also have been organized on holistic medicine. This interest in holistic medicine is really a healthy development. The credit for this goes to many open-minded individuals from medical as well as other fields. However holistic medicine has not been adequately understood, appreciated and practiced by most of us. It is viewed with suspicion and even certain degree of contempt by majority of individuals, partly because of prejudice, ignorance, rigid concepts etc. and partly because of irresponsible statements and propaganda by quacks.

Let us take a look at the present state of affairs before going into the concept of holistic medicine. At present the field of medicine is divided into allopathy, homoeopathy, ayurveda, unani, siddha, magnetotherapy, naturopathy

etc. Some times medicine is also categorized as Tibetan medicine, Indian medicine, Chinese medicine, Western medicine etc. (This is not quite the same as preclinical, paraclinical, paramedical, nursing, specialities, superficialities etc., which are divisions but without conceptual differences. There may be methodological and technical differences but not conceptual. This in contrast to the division stated above, in which there are conceptual differences. In fact degree of differences sets these divisions against one another and proponents of the individual divisions go to the extent of warring!). Why do such divisions exist in medicine alone? Why do not we have divisions such as Chinese physics, Indian chemistry and American electronics, in other sciences?

This is because

A] Medicine is conceptual conglomeration of various concepts of different sciences, psychology, philosophy, ethics, art, traditions, ecosystems, etc. Since many of these vary with region, the medicine also is divided on the basis of region. This leads to differences in the concepts of human life to modes of treatment, at all levels.

B] It is also because of the degree of abstractness in medicine developed because of the nature of laboratory specific to medicine. Unlike laboratories in the field of physics and chemistry the laboratories in case of medicine are living organisms which show tremendous variability. The field of observation and knowledge are almost the same as the student or the observer viz. human being. The instincts, mind, emotions, thoughts, consciousness etc. are very much abstract and do not lend themselves definite, predictable reproducible conclusions because they vary in the observed individuals as well as observers!

The concept of holistic medicine emerges as a result of realization of the underlying unity and continuity amongst the apparently different disciplines of medicine. In fact it emerges from the realization of the universal unity and continuity. This is emergence of SATVIKA JNAANA [Geeta 18.20. To describe Sanskrit words, Roman script is used

in a phonetic manner as it was thought an easier way for conveying at least nearly correct pronunciation]. It is usual for most of us to get stuck to the differences as they strike our senses and build our concepts based on these observations of ours. The knowledge of different disciplines and recognition of their separate existence is called RAJASA JNAANA [Geeta 18.21]. Those who practice mixed or integrated medicine or advocate it, may fit in this category. The third variety is ignorance about every other medical discipline and adamant adherence to any given medical discipline alone is state of darkness called TAMASA JNAANA [Geeta 18.22]. Most of the warring factions from different medical disciplines opposing the emergence of holistic medicine can fit in this category.

The word holistic is derived from the Greek word holos which literally means a) Taking in the whole of something b) Whole of organism is a more fruitful field of study than its parts or symptoms.

It can be stated for the sake of simplicity and further clarity that the holistic medicine is Trans-religious [not religious or non religious i.e. neither holy nor unholy], Trans-national [neither national nor non-national/anti-national], Trans-cultural [neither of a particular culture nor against any particular culture], Trans-intellectual [neither bound in a particular intellectual framework nor opposed to a particular intellectual framework], Trans-ideological [neither committed to a particular ideology nor opposed to a particular ideology] and Trans-scientific [neither unscientific nor locked in rigid criteria of physical sciences].

Study of holistic medicine constitutes efforts to understand, visualize and realize the multi-charactered, multifaceted, multidimensional and multi-layered complex nature of life (in addition to what is learnt in allopathy or what is learnt in any one discipline). The intention of study is to comprehend the continuity and validity (or otherwise) of the concepts of different disciplines (allopathy, ayurveda, SAANKHYA philosophy,

homeopathy, yoga, Chinese medicine etc.) which emerge and get evolved from different levels of consciousness of differently constituted individuals in different regions with different backgrounds.

The approach of holistic medicine can neither be classified as eclectic, analytical, synthetic or reductionist etc. The holistic approach embodies all these as means to “see” the unity and continuity in different phenomena.

The holistic medicine is therefore not a new system or new discipline of medicine. It is a way to see things as they are rather than how they appear and thereby preserve and pro-mote health and improve effectiveness of healing.

Implications of Holistic Approach

Holistic approach simultaneously makes us aware of possibilities as well as limitations. For example understanding the ayurvedic concepts such as DOSHA, DHATU, MALA, their balance, their imbalance, concept of PRAKRUTI i.e. constitution etc. with holistic approach, add new dimension to the knowledge of the student of physiology as well as to the diagnostic skills of a clinician from the discipline of allopathy. Understanding of the concepts of panchakarma, naturopathy yoga etc. with holistic approach makes the treatment also more effective because of several different modalities and remedies to the repertoire.

Besides, holistic understanding of human existence, which is fundamental to the study of holistic medicine gives us insight into the enormous healing powers within the patient and helps us to help him/her to use them beneficially. This is a great benefit in terms of empowerment of the clinician as well as the patient.

Holistic approach relieves us from the unhealthy patronizing attitude and makes us aware of our limitations, i.e. gives us knowledge of our ignorance! It gives us the courage to see our ignorance and admit it. It imparts intellectual honesty to admit the ignorance hidden under the Greek, Latin, Sanskrit or other esoteric/mystifying

terms, characteristic to many branches of science in general and medicine in particular. Take for example hysteria. We do not know any physiological mechanisms underlying this condition. But the ignorance is hidden under the term. Another example is that mind, thoughts etc. The ignorance about the physical dimensions of dreams, thoughts, emotions etc, even as we can not dispute or disprove their existence is hidden under several terms! Holistic approach reduces hypocrisy and imparts humility.

Some more examples from the disciplines of medicine are as follows. Holistic approach enables us to see the limitations intrinsic to standardization of weight, height and possible errors in interpretation of biochemical parameters and calculation of doses of drugs due to lack of due consideration to variations in the constitutions. Holistic approach cautions us against indiscriminate use of ayurvedic drugs without due consideration to the variation in the quality, nature, source etc. of the ingredients of the drug as well as the constitution of the patient and the type of climate. Holistic approach gives us insight into the possible mechanism of the action of homeopathic drugs on the one hand and cautions about the ambiguity in the method of diagnosis arising out of subjective factors related to the doctor as well as the patient, on the other. Holistic approach reveals to us the possibility of “cosmic homeostasis” on the one hand while simultaneously exposing the possible fallibility intrinsic to practice of gemology, astrology, numerology etc. due to number of different approaches with fundamental differences in the interpretations, without sufficiently convincing reasons. Beside all above, implication of the holistic approach is readiness change and accommodate new ideas, i.e. not getting shackled in dogmas of any kind.

But possibly the most important implication is development of proper perspective about the health and healing. This is because proper perspective would help in development of proper policies of services, education,

research, production in the field of medicine and coordination of all these with a variety of policies influencing the health indirectly. An example of this can be very simple. It is this holistic approach that would facilitate the urgently needed preparation of syllabus of holistic medicine and its introduction in all the medical institutions. It is this approach which if properly understood, would facilitate the use of prayers, water therapy, mud packing, massage, yoga, music, colors, aroma and such simple healing methods (so much recommended by Mahatma Gandhi) in all the medical institutions. It is this approach, which would help the decision-makers to realize that the national unity and even freedom (which is essential for global unity) would be in jeopardy in absence of such holistic (unifying) steps. It is commendable that there is an ayurveda department active in K. E. M. Hospital but it would be far more commendable if holistic approach and facilities such as those mentioned above are provided in all mainstream (allopathy as well as so called alternate systems) medical colleges and hospitals.

As an introduction to the holistic medicine we will study the human existence which would prepare a foundation for the appropriate decision making, policy-making, planning, preparation of syllabus etc., to promote the actual training and practice of holistic medicine.

Holistic concept of Human existence

Let us see first the meaning of the word existence. The meaning of existence varies with respect to what exists and the perception of observer about what exists. Simple examples such as phenomena of existence of a stone, electricity, radioactivity, space, time, car, computer, robot, fungi, plants, ameba, fish, cat, monkey, man, dream, emotions, thoughts and consciousness do not constitute a homogenous phenomena. This is because the attributes all these elements although have commonality, they also vary. Now looking at from different angle, the “perception” of the existence of all these by nonliving objects, living organisms such as ameba, monkeys and man would also

vary! When the existence of a many particles is deduced because of the effect it leaves even as it cannot be observed even by the best techniques of resolutions expands the concept of existence. In this con-text holistic concept of human existence attempts go beyond what is observed under electron microscope, X ray diffraction, or such sophisticated techniques.

There are two ways of looking at human existence. In one, the human life is restricted to the span beginning from conception to physical death. This means that life has come out of nothing. This point of view does not fit in the universally accepted concept that nothing new is created and nothing ever gets destroyed. There is only transformation.

Further when it comes to understanding of genetic diseases, this concept tends to provide explanations for how the diseases are related to certain genotype. But it can not give convincing explanation for the particular nature of cross over in a particular zygote and why there is such a great variation even in similar genotypes. Further it also raises a question as to how can matter per se determine the sequence of events seen in expression of genetic diseases with such wide variation in time, without any force or design under-lying them? How can matter govern mater?

This concept, from holistic point of view fails see the underlying continuity of the life, which may be referred to as universal consciousness. It looks at individual lives in bits and as separate entities. This gives rise to individualism and selfishness. This also gives rise to sense of despair and hopelessness, as it has nothing to offer to an individual except inevitable death. The profundity and ecstasy of universal brotherhood are rendered arbitrary and coercive, as there is no substantiation of it in this concept.

Lastly, due the arbitrary assumption that everything can be explained by laws physical sciences, the potential in the human being [everybody involved in healing and

caring for the patient including patient himself/herself existing in the form of perspective, thoughts, emotions etc. is totally neglected or upheld without substantiation.

In the other way, human life is considered as a contingent and “life” as such is viewed to extend beyond the span ranging from conception to physical death. This concept assumes that life is associated with body during physical life but exists independently before birth and after physical death. So life per se [universal consciousness] is always there and its association with matter constitutes birth and dissociation from body marks the death. Life continues. Holistic approach prefers (though not believes or insists) this second concept as it provides answers (even though tentative) to the questions not answered by the first concept. It views human life as part of universal life or universal consciousness being in continuity with it. In a continuum of universal consciousness, sometimes referred to unified field is a field and the individual consciousness, life, time, space, living and nonliving matter being in and around it as contingents.

This concept creates a sound conceptual framework for universal brotherhood, global unity, noble deeds, hope, love and harmony. It gives intellectual ground to rise above pettiness. It opens up the treasure of power within an individual and thereby ensure far better patient care and health promotion.

If it is appreciated that RAJASA and SATVIKA are two stages of human mind and hence are not disunited, then the two can coexist and complement each other. Thus different individuals can be seen with definite ends and beginnings as well as their unity can also be appreciated. The experience of nothingness creates the first concept and the experience of bliss creates the second concept.

Unity amongst the concepts of human existence in some disciplines

AYURVEDIC paradigm helps us appreciate the apparent human existence as a contingent in universal

continuum.

AYURVEDA states: anything that exists is DRAVYA, characteristics of DRAVYA are GUNA, and effects of DRAVYA are KARMA.

(If we extend this to human life then implications of KARMA can be called PHALA. This brings forth the KARMA – PHALA – SIDDHANTA in new light).

AYURVEDIC terms SAMANYA and VISHESHA connote commonality and specificity respectively. SAMAVAAAYA means interrelationship/interactions.

ABHAAVA means nonexistence, ‘absence’ before its coming into existence or after its transformation, not being “present” elsewhere or non-relationship with other DRAVYA. (Marathi Encyclopedia Vol. I).

AYURVEDA (SANKHYA and other similar philosophies) conceive universe and everything therein, as constituted of nine DRAVYAS viz. AATMAA, MANA, KAALA, DISHAA, AKASHA, VAYU, TEJA, AAPA, PRUTHVI. In our view, PANCHAMAHABHUTAS i.e. the five causal entities viz. PRUTHVI, AAPA, TEJA, VAYU, AAKASHA are forms of energies/space, and the number may vary depending on new discoveries, basic tenets remaining intact.

Just as reflection of Sun leaves the Sun intact, similarly all the nine DRAVYAS are essentially reflections of AATMA, it itself remaining changeless.

MAANDUKYOPAN-ISHADA explains this concept. Thus, from consciousness AATMAA, the multiplanar, multidimensional universe i.e. KARYA DRAVYAS becomes manifest. We don’t believe but consider such manifestation of universe more probable than in any other way.

Consciousness through TANMATRAS i.e. pleuripotent space-energy-forms of cosmic life, variably get ‘reflected’ or ‘converted’ into KAARANA DRAVYAS viz. PANCHAMAHAABHUTAS, and from them into KAARYA DRAVYAS i.e. manifest universe. ‘Conversion’ of consciousness into time, space, energy, life etc. may be referred to as “transversion”, because conversion in

general, connotes change of matter to matter or matter into energy and energy into matter.

Ontogenetic and phylogenetic processes are considered reversed analogues of the development of universe (which is from consciousness into matter) viz. from matter to consciousness and are viewed as contingent in the continuum of consciousness. The continuum itself is also referred to as life and called ANUBANDHA.

Human existence thus is

A] That which is manifest from birth to death, STHULADEHA,

B] That which spreads beyond birth and death viz. KARANA DEHA, SUKSHMA DEHA, LINGA DEHA referred to as astral bodies,

C] All that coexists along with body as well as possibly extends beyond but is not manifest viz. FIVE KOSHAS (ANNAMAYA, PRANAMAYA, MANOMAYA, VIDNYANAMAYA & ANANDAMAYA KOSHA).

We feel that reduction of life to only what is manifest and reduction of human life to only span from birth to death is too restrictive and too short sighted. It is too tubular. Individual life and consciousness are contingents in cosmic life and consciousness and hence the individual lives and forms are referred to as “ ‘clothes’ which are changed” [Geeta, 2.22].

However, study of extended realms of human existence demand increasing exploration to arrive at more definitive conclusions regarding TIRYAGYONIS as referred to latter. (A detailed account of this is available in Autobiography of a Yogi-by Swami Paramahansa Yogananda).

Ayurveda derives its concepts from thought –cum –realization viz. DHARSHANAS. One of these concepts is Sankhya Darshana and one of the concepts is CHATURVIMSHATI TATVATMAKA PURUSHA i.e. universal being and individual being are constituted of 24 elements. The universal being himself is referred to as PURUSHA, which means cosmic consciousness and

be-haves as a SAKSHI, i.e. has the same role as sun in forming a reflection, where sun remains unchanged, like time-space in which phenomena take place and without which the phenomena CANNOT take place.

With respect to manifest universe AYURVEDA has an elaborate system to characterize every element encountered in nature and in human being. This is elaborately discussed in DRAVYA GUNA SHASTRA. We feel that it is absolutely essential to corroborate this description, with mod-ern physics, chemistry and biology. Thus TEEKSHNA, GURU, LAGHU, MRUDU, MANDA, DRAVYA etc. can very well be interpreted in modern terms on more reliable taxonomical grounds. Thus objective characteristics can be distinguished from subjective/sensation based description of characteristics.

Ayurveda has subsequently developed concepts, which are closer to allopathy. Thus, e.g. SHADDHAATWAATMAKA PURUSHA or CHIKITSA PURUSHA-the living human being to be treated [AATMAA+ 5 MAHABHUTAS] is a concept, closer to physiology and anatomy & psychology in allopathy. From SHADDHAATWAATMAKA PURUSHA further development is the concept of DOSHA DHATU MALA VIDNYANA. Thus, three DOSHAS viz. VAATA, PITTA and KAPHA, seven DHATUS, viz. RASA, RAKTA, MANSA, MEDA, ASTHI, MAJJA, SHUKRA and MALAS viz. .MUTRA, PURISHA, SWEDA etc. One can appreciate increasing emphasis on understanding of physiology, psychology and anatomy of STHOOLA DEHA, i. e. human body.

Thus with respect to details of embryogenesis, digestion, circulation etc., one comes across advancement in ayurveda. But it is not comparable to that in allopathy. However the concepts such as RASA, VEERYA, VIPAKA, PRABHAVA show increasing understanding digestive, absorptive and assimilative processes.

The concepts of AAHAARA (diet) and VIHAARA (psycho-physico-sociocultural etc.-behaviour) are in fact richer in AYURVEDA. JATISAAMAANYA & GUNASAAMAANYA are AYURVEDIC concepts similar to substitution of deficiency

in to ways. Thus JAATISAAMAANYA is banana for banana and GUNASAAMAANYA is anything similar to properties in place of banana. AYURVEDA teaches that AHAARA and VIHAARA profoundly influence whole being and is a very valid concept.

DOSHA, DHATU, MALA: VAATA, PITTA, KAPHA and KARANA, LINGA & STHULA DEHA represent in a brilliant exposition of the hierarchy in Spirituo-pscho Neuro-endocrine-cellular integration. This needs careful attention.

VAATA evidently relates to bioelectrical (neural activity) activity, PITTA to metabolism (endocrine and biochemical activities) and KAPHA to stable structural and functional organisation of the body systems, including various chemical bonds and enzymes activities favouring synthesis of large molecules. Whereas DOSHAS are the controllers and DHATUS the controlled ones, the MALAS are the effects in such a cascade. All of them operate in a mutually beneficial manner. Role of and concept of MALA here is notably richer and more profound than the concept of 'excreta'. MALA has important role in AYURVEDIC understanding of 'HOMEOSTASIS'. Role of MALA must be explored as it almost certainly has a lot surprises in store.

Concept of AGNI is almost certainly equivalent to ATP and enzymes such as ATPases represent PITTA. KAPHA represents enzymes e.g. glycogen synthetase promoting processes such as glycogenesis, lipogenesis and also those which prevent or slow down break down of ATP.

The concept of SROTASES teaches us the importance of identifying importance of space, pathways, gated channels, tracts like gastrointestinal tracts, Visceras such as heart, lungs etc. which facilitate the orchestrated interplay of billions of molecules.

The concept of PRAANA, and the five PRAANAS is common to AYURVEDA and YOGA. PRAANA represents a bridge between cosmic life and individual life and cosmic

consciousness and individual consciousness. Its effects in body are also called PRAANAS and these are evident as manifestations or responses of CNS and ANS activity. The regions of these PRAANAS or VAAYUS are CHEST = RESPIRATION = PRAANA = ANAAHATA CHAKARA, anus = discharge of urine feces etc. = APANA = MULAADHAARA CHAKARA, navel = digestion = SAMANA = MANIPURA CHAKARA, throat = neck = deglutition = UDAANA = circulation = VYAANA = SWADHISTHANA CHAKARA.

We feel that holistic understanding, harmonization, homogenization and amalgamation of all these concepts related to STHULADEHA is extremely desirable or rather essential and possible today.

Once we appreciate that AGNI is analogous to ATP, PITTA represents catabolism, KAPHA represents anabolism and VAATA represents central nervous bioelectricity, it becomes easy to understand subtypes of VAATA, KAPHA & PITTA such as AAMAVATA, JALAVAATA, SHLESHKAKA KAPHA, TARPANA, BHRJAK PITTA, RANJAK PITTA etc. which are different manifestations of different DOSHAS.

As far as MALAS are concerned they represent much more than mere excreta as referred to earlier. It is necessary therefore that allopathy enriches itself with this concept. Sialorrhea, polyuria, menorrhagia, diarrhea etc. show disorders of MALA DHAARANAA.

AYURVEDA teaches us continuity, interactivity and similarity of every aspect of human existence (JAATISAMAANYA & GUMASAAMAANYA) with rest of the universe and provides some of the brilliant premises for choice of treatment.

The YOGA teaches us about five PRANAS. But KUNDALINI is a special concept unique to YOGA, in fact, HATHA YOGA.

HA & THA are analogous to CHANDRA & SURYA or YIN and YANG principles.

KUNDALINI in our view, represents possibly a link between KARANA DEHA, LINGA DEHA and STHOOLA

DEHA and may represent DNA or genotype, or even a causal 'precursor' of genotype.

It is supposed to be located at SWADHISHTHANA CHAKRA, which is a location of germinal epithelium from which gonads are developed at around eight weeks of intrauterine life. According to some, KUNDALINI in quiescent state comes to reside at MULADHARA CHAKRA from which 72000 NADIS spring/arise. KUNDALINI roughly corresponds to VAATASTHAANA and these two according to us represent "trapped" potentials for the development of entire personality, which in YOGIC parlance is referred to as the MEETING OF JEEVA AND SHIVA.

The NAADIS such as IDA, PINGALA SUSHUMNA, GANDHARI, HASTAJIVIKA etc. have to be interpreted on the background of interplay between all five KOSHAS.

The concept of seven LOKAS indicates insight of YOGA, UPANISHADAS, AYURVEDA etc. into a being, its characteristics and its relationship to its levels of consciousness.

Thus, BHUHU, BHUVAH, SWAH, MAHAH, JANAHA, TAPAH, SATYAM on the one hand and ATALA, VITALA, SUTALA, TALATALA, MAHATALA, RASATALA and PATALA indicate crude or subtle nature of beings and their consciousness.

YOGA also teaches us about VAANIS i.e. expressions. The expressions can be lie, partially lie, superficial without commitment or from the bottom of the heart with total commitment. Thus YOGA depicts four levels of expression VAIKHARI from pharynx, MADHYAMA from throat meaning involving autonomic(emotional) content, PASHYANTI from heart i.e. deeper aspects of emotions with even greater personal instinctual involvement and PARA from NABHI i.e. navel i.e. VAATASTHANA or KUNDALINI i.e. very source or root of life where there is COMPLETE dissolution of the being in his/her statement.

The Chinese concept of CHI is analogous to or equivalent

to PRAANA of AYURVEDA and YOGA. It also represents a bridge between individual and cosmic 'life'. Chinese medicine refers to ancestral energy which is (hereditary) contribution from parents and energy from food (metabolic fuel) and air (oxygen and other gases).

We can view these concepts as corresponding to linkage between PANHAKOSHAS and rest of the universe.

The CHI flows through the STHULADEHA i.e. body through different pathways, which possibly correspond with paths of bioelectrical fields or NADIS or even may overlap with neural impulses.

Chinese medicine also teaches us the dynamically interactive phenomena in nature and their role in human existence. These phenomena are opposite and complementary in nature. Their complementarity and opposition is relative and not absolute. Thus certain temperature is YIN for high and YANG for lower range.

Similarly day-night, dry-moist, heaven-earth etc. are similar to the GUNAS of AYURVEDA. With respect to human body upper part is YANG and lower part is YIN. Outside is YANG and inside is YIN! Wakefulness, contraction of mind and muscles respectively, correspond to YANG and sleep and relaxation to YIN.

The CHI is further subdivided into YONG i.e. deep-seated nutritive energy ensuring stability and WEI the superficial protected energy, which does not circulate ensuring defense. These concepts are close to KOSHAS.

MERIDIANS or pathways are mainly 24 and are associated with ten organs and two functions, thus precluding any semblance with allopathic anatomy of STHULA – DEHA i. e. physical body.

TU-MAI and JEN-MAI are governing and conception vessels respectively. They originate from the same locus as KUNDALINI or KANDA and terminate in between nose and mouth, thus showing equivalents to IDA and PINGALA. These meridians contain effective points corresponding to CHAKRAS, LOTUSES and PLEXUSES. The concept that

energy flows in twenty four hours suggests similarity to neuroendocrine biological clocks, especially circadian rhythms.

CHINESE concepts teach us the presence of 361 acupuncture points which may either correspond to receptor density, receptor sensitivity, static bio electrical fields, or accumulated bioelectrical effects. Interestingly, electrical resistance in these points is demonstrated to be low.

CHINESE MEDICINE thus teaches us the necessity to identify dynamic interactions between human life and rest of Universe and importance of moxibution, acupuncture, accupressure analogous to panchakarma, massage, pranayama, asanas, tattooing, piercing, branding etc.

HOMEOPATHY does not teach us concretely about either STHULA DEHA or KARANA or LINGA or SUKSHMA DEHA. But HOMEOPATHY brilliantly explores the nature of interactions of universe / cosmic and individual life through history taking. Since this history telling is closest to the MANOMAYA, PRAANAMAYA, VIDNYAANAMAYA and AANANDAMAYA KOSHA homeopathy probably truly discovers subtler aspects of biological phenomena, which include interactions producing either health or disease.

Homeopathic paradigm is similar to AYURVEDA but its emphasis are different and are evident in its THERAPEUTICS which are considered in greater details in one of the latter articles.

MAGNETOTHERAPY tells us some facts about STHULA-DEHA which are of particular interest, though it does not propose any elaborate / separate model of human existence.

Thus magnetic field produced by brain is $3 \times 10^{(power 8)}$ gauss, by heart $10^{(power 6)}$ gauss, by muscles during flexion $10^{(power 7)}$ gauss.

Magnetoencephalography, magnetocardiography, magnetic surface stimulators etc. are employed to probe into further details of biomagnetic phenomena in modern

allopathic research. Allopathic advances in the science of Physiology i.e. functioning of STHULA-DEHA teach us about various magnetism related phenomena such as

- A] RESTING MEMBRANE POTENTIAL
- B] ACTION POTENTIAL
- C] IONIC FLUXES ACROSS MEMBRANES
- D] GATED ION CHANNELS and their implications.

Biomagnetic and Bioelectrical fields and their implications with respect to health and disease are not yet well under-stood. Their relationship to KOSHAS also needs thorough exploration.

It is said that the human body is a battery and emanates electromagnetic waves at a rate of 80 million cycles per second. Implication of this is also not known. Implications of magnetism related to fertilization, embryogenesis etc. have to be explored.

Further, effects of planets, specific points in space and time, orientation on the five KOSHAS have to be explored. These may reveal new and so far unthought of implications of even gravity and similar forces.

Paracelsus, Mesmer and Samuel Hahnemann had identified 'magnetic' aspect of human existence and evolved the treatment of disease. But what they called MAGNETIC has to be studied and verified. (Electromagnetic man: Cyril W Smith and Simon Best, 1989).

With respect to allopathy, allopathy teaches us in very great details about the functioning of STHULA DEHA. Considering that the precise 'subject' or 'target' of treatment is human body and mind its feats are more than impressive and of tremendous day-to-day utility. But this dramatic (apparent) success has left A LOT TO BE DESIRED because of its restriction to STHULA DEHA and MANA alone. Let us see in brief the brilliant advances of allopathy in knowledge of STHULA DEHA and MANA in brief.

Allopathy conceives human existence as that from

conception to death of an individual. It denies involvement of any vital principle in human life. Thus it teaches about STHULA DEHA and MANOMAYA DEHA (also probably in part). This avoids tautology on the one hand but invites restrictive thinking about tubular vision, on the other.

Genetics and heredity teach us about DNA, genetic code, transfer of characteristics from parents to offspring via the male and female gametes i.e. heredity (the forces which determine (either separate or as attributes of) DNA) which determine 'assembly ' of genotype and time, dependent expression of the same are not known.

The nuclear package of heritage, genotype (genetic factors) and other environmental material as well as other factors (epigenetic as well as other unknown factors)decide events in organogenesis/embryogenesis. Epigenetic factors may be:

- A] Drugs or other toxic substances consumed by mother during pregnancy especially 4th to 8th week of intrauterine life.
- B] Effects of external radiation.
- C] Maternal hormones.
- D] Emotions of mother (through hormones or ANS imbalance or both).
- E] Mother's nutrition,
- F] Infections to mother,
- G] Maternal diseases such as abnormality, malignancy etc
- H] External mechanical trauma

Organogenesis during 266 days of intrauterine life leads to full term fetus ready for delivery, after receiving food and oxygen from mother via placenta and umbilical cord. [Fetus lacks adult respiratory and circulatory systems as well as many other functions. YOGA does not seem to explain anything related to fetus- Even AYURVEDA does not give parallels of KOSHAS or VAYUS (PRANAS) in case of fetus- Possible relationship of SUKSMA DEHA

to fertilization etc. remains an enigma just as role of the same in determination of genotype also remains a mystery. Life of a fetus with respect to sleep-wakefulness, consciousness etc. also remains a mystery.)

Fetus is delivered usually at an appropriate date and time for survival in external world,(unless there are accidents, earthquakes, assaults, surgical interventions etc.)

The functioning of a newborn baby is explored by physiological, anatomical, anthropometric, psychological approaches.

(The good old concept common to many parallels approaches is that of study of a constellation, orientations of stars, planets etc. and their possible effects. This is called JATAKA VARTAMANA, or KUNDALI. Besides HASTASAMUDRIKA or Palmistry, Physiognomy, Numerology etc. also are employed).

The newborn has a body(the study of which is advances tremendously and mind (the study of which is deductive from its manifestations in body or in behaviour), give insight into the individual newborn's body and mind.

Thus allopathy tells us about conscious, subconscious and unconscious planes of mind and explains many phenomena on the basis of such understanding.

Allopathy teaches us the organization of body into different organ systems, organs tissues, cells, cell organelles, details of the molecular phenomena. Thus with the advent CAT scan, PET scan, MRI, Electron microscopy, endoscopy, Radio Immuno Assays. Immunocytochemical assays, it teaches us homeostasis and functioning of central nervous, cardiovascular, respiratory, immune, autonomic nervous, endocrine, reproductive, hematological, musculoskeletal Excretory, alimentary systems. It teaches us precise characteristics of internal environment and factors modifying it, various characteristics of nerve impulse the language of central nervous system, details of receptors bringing in these impulses by transduction, determinants

and regulatory mechanisms responsible for cardiovascular and respiratory functions, the precise and moment to moment effects of autocrine, paracrine, endocrine, secretions, the hypothalamo, pituitary, gonadal, uterine axis, menarche, menopause, the details of formation and activities of blood, the elaborate details of myosin/actin/actinin/troponin/tropomyosin and energetics of muscle contraction, the molecular mechanisms determining acid-base balance in body and timely-appropriate formation of urine, digestion absorption, assimilation etc. It enlightens us with precision details such as Nerve Cell Adhesion Molecules and it simultaneously enables us with splicing techniques and other techniques in genetic engineering. It enables us to perform cardiac catheterization and treat 'heart patients', as well as it enables us to design and develop prosthesis and achieve a lot in rehabilitation.

Allopathy thus in short, provides us with knowledge, simple ways of acquiring knowledge and relatively simple but tremendously useful techniques of investigations and interventions with respect to understanding conception, birth, growth, development, aging in health and disease, of the STHULA DEHA even with its restrictive approach and hence is indispensable. But its efficacy with multiply with HOLISTIC approach to human existence.

Holistic understanding of human existence, a cursory glance at which is made in the foregoing, will enable every one of us to be better clinicians, teachers, scientists, health policy planners, health executives etc. but more importantly to be better and wiser individuals.



CHAPTER 37

PRACTICAL UTILITY OF UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF DEATH AND IMMORTALITY

Why does mere thought of death, either of ourselves or that of our kin shatters us completely?

Look at the allopathic concept of death and you will get the answer.

Death from allopathic point of view:

Biologic death

a] Body death, b] tissue death c] cellular death and d] cell organelle death.

Death is declared after one observes; loss of corneal reflex, heart beats and cyanosis.

Body death

Symptoms of death can be immediate, delayed and very delayed.

Immediate:

Heart beats and ECG are silent for 5 minutes.

Delayed:

A] lustreless eyes, B] appearance of pallor skin and loss of elasticity in skin C] Decrease in temperature over a period of 12 to 24 hours. D] Postmortem cyanosis in 4 to 12 hours. CO and HCN poisoning can cause cherry red appearance.

Very delayed:

A] Primary relaxation: Excitability, conductivity and contractility are present

B] Rigor mortis: Starting with the visceral muscles it is complete in about 12 to 24 hours.

C] Secondary relaxation: No excitability, contractility and conductivity.

D] Putrefaction: The body gets reduced to the original elements such as carbon, nitrogen and hydrogen and oxygen etc. as a result of saprophytic [Saprophytes are microorganisms living on dead material] action and autolytic enzymes [Those chemical substances which cause dissolution of the same cell that secretes them.]. However bones resist this change for longer time.

Tissue death

Different tissues have different mitotic [Mitosis means cell division]. Thus from activity, different life spans, different functions and different regenerative capacity. Moreover the presence of hydrolytic and proteolytic [breaking down protein molecules] enzymes can influence the process of tissue death.

Cell death

The muscle and nerve cells live practically throughout the life of the organism, though there is loss of many cells.

- Red blood cells [RBC] live for about 120 days.
- Liver cells live for about 60 to 90 days.
- WBCs live for about 12 days.
- Intestinal mucosal cells live for about 18 hours.

Cell organelle death

There is nuclear and cellular swelling followed by disruption which is influenced by lysozymes.

Usually it is said that natural death is associated with cellular and tissue dysfunction and death, followed by the death of organs, followed by organ systems, ultimately followed by the death of the organism.

This is true when accidents, traumas, poisoning and such events are not involved in death. Aging would lead to gradual dysfunction and be followed by stoppage of respiration and heart and brain.

In societies where there are excess of stresses the heart, lungs or brain may be affected even in the absence of natural aging of the rest of the body. This is called primary involvement of these organs in the causation of death.

Brain death

Brain death is a condition when there is permanent loss of brain function with areflexia and loss of consciousness because of a clearly defined cause. This is sometimes called vegetative life.

In drowning, burns, drugs, electric shock etc. the death is unnatural and follows a different pattern where the organ death is simultaneous or follows the brain death.

Death and transplantation/donation of organs and whole body

Since it is known that all the cells of an organism do not die simultaneously, cornea, kidney, liver etc can be transplanted immediately after death before these organs are “dead”.

Forensic aspects of death

They usually refer to detecting cause of death and time of death and thereby help the court of law to explore the truth related to that death.

Death punishment also referred to as the capital punishment is supposed to be the most dreaded one and the severest one. It is beyond reforming measures and

other deterrent punishments! It gives no more chance!

Definitiona of death from Ayurvedic point of view

There are three phenomena in physical life viz. UTPATTI, STHITI AND LAYA.

UTPATTI

ASTI JAYATE: To exist and manifest

STHITI

VARDHATE VIPARINAMATE: Growth and differentiation. In differentiation one comes across apoptosis i.e. disappearance of cells which is marked by cell shrinking and nuclear shrinking [as against cell swelling and nuclear swelling and disintegration which occurs in cell death called necrosis].

LAYA

PAKSHIYATE NASHYATI: Gradual reduction of body mater and its conversion into elements like hydrogen, car-bon, nitrogen etc.

Definitions of death in Ayurveda are as follows:

A] SHARIRENDRIYATMAMANASAM VIYOGAH

Dissociation of body, sensory organs, soul and mind is called death.

[CHAKRAPANI]

It can be appreciated that the concept of life is not identical in all these definitions.

DHARI:

DHARIYATI SHARIRAM:

PUTITAM GANTU NA DADATI

It is the one, which keeps the body organized and in absence of it the body gets decomposed.

JEEVITAM:

PRANAN DHARAYATI ITI JEEVITAM

It holds or in fact regulates the vital process of breathing, in fact all neurophysiological processes].

AYUH CHAITANYASANTANH ETACCHA

GARBHAVADHIMARANAPARYANTAM. SUKHAU,
DUKKHAYU, AHITAU, HITAU

Life is that, which spans from conception to death and is classified as, happy, sad, beneficial and harmful.

CHARAK SAMHITA

These definitions of life are not difficult to fathom. They fit in our day to day observation and also common sense. But it is also to be noted that it is because of this restricted concept of human existence limited to body and material possessions and death that one gets shattered by mere thought of death.

The subjective sensation of the impending death can itself be shattering. It is especially so when we are unaware of the phenomenon of death and have got engrossed in the mundane matters. It is very much akin to the fear of losing everything in life!

The misery of death and helplessness of life can be greatly reduced if more people understand the phenomena of death and immortality. Understanding of the phenomena of death and immortality can give you strength, and prepare you to face death with dignity. But more importantly it gives clarity about how to live. Overcoming the fear of death and insecurity born therefrom is also essential because such insecurity though very 'normal' leads to a variety of evils in the society. But one more important and practical use of such understanding is in counseling and developing more centers of counseling for a] terminally ill patients and their relatives, b] doctors, nurses and others concerned with treatment of the patients and c] members of the bereaved family.

Let us try to understand death, life and immortality more completely, as it will be useful to us in stress management.

Science of death is called Thanatology. Thanatology [Thanatos [G] means death or poisonous snake] is one of the oldest of sciences. It deals with various causes and psychosocial aspects of death. The other branch

of science, which deals with existence of after death, is called Eschatology. [eskhatos [G] means death. It includes concepts such as day of judgement, Azrael etc.

One of the most ancient texts on death is RUGVEDA. We find a variety of prayers including that of SOMA and mention about the owl in RUGVEDA! In the aborigines in many parts of the world, there are different customs suggesting that they believed in life after death. The ancient Egyptians also believed in the life after death and this is apparent in their custom of preserving the dead bodies and treating them as if they were alive. In Jews and Moslems it is believed that the death angel Azrael takes the soul from the body at the moment of death. In Hindus it is believed that the Yamadoots i.e. the assistants of Yama who is also called Yamadharma [The god who is supposed to be in charge of every individual's life and death] take away the souls from the bodies and distribute different types of postmortem states to them. With the belief that the souls are immortal shrines of saints are worshipped in Hindus as well as Moslems. The shrine [called samadhi] of Jnaneshavr at Alandi and that Haji Ali in Mumbai are world famous.

B| VIDAH EKOTTARA MRUTUMSHATAM
PRACHAKSHATE, TATRAIVA EKAKALAMRUTU SHESHAH
SARVE AGANTUKAH SMRUTAH

A person dies due to natural death after 100 years and the remaining causes are called extraneous. In Sanskrit they are called agantuka and include, fire, water, poison, accident of other varieties etc.

ATHARVAVEDA

From astrological point of view 6, 8 and 12 places are called ASHUBHA STHANAS. The eighth place is considered to be that of the death.

From palmistry point of view the lifeline and the breaks therein give an idea about the longevity of a person and the direction and destiny of this line give an idea about the nature of that individual with respect to suicidal

tendencies.

It is important to remember that one should not go on fore-casting in an irresponsible manner. One girl was told by her friend, that she would commit suicide. Fortunately she met [before it was too late], a more mature individual, who explained the importance of a line going on and around the mount of moon and she was saved from actual suicide!

Death was not dreaded as much as it is dreaded today. Different methods for ending life willingly are found in scriptures!

It used be called Atmarpana [Atmas means self and Arpana means to give or surrender] which means surrendering your body and leaving it [like we vacate our flats]. Prayoveshana means fasting in reverence till the life ends and you can leave the body.

MANUSMRUTI [A book which describes various rules and regulations thought to be desirable for the well being of society and an individual and prevalent in India (with certain variations) in the past. There are other books of this kind. They named after different individuals. Thus there are Naradsmruti, Parasharasmruti, Vasishta smruti, Yajnyavalkyasmruti etc.] says, Drink only water and vayu [breathe] and walk towards northeast direction.

Lamas end their lives when they consider it ready to end.

Jains end their lives by Samlekhana and anashana [fasting]

Bhishma chose to die willingly. Hence he is called ICCHAMARANI. [ICCHA = willingness or volition, MARANA = death]. He decided to die and voluntarily postponed it so as to end the life in UTTARAYANA [Six months between 14th January to 14th July of any year].

Dnyaneshvar [also spelled as Jnaneshvar] was a saint and visionary, of 12th century, from the state of Maharashtra. He ended his life when he thought the life mission was over.

V. D. Savarkar who was a freedom fighter, thinker, writer, poet, dramatist etc. and Vinoba Bhave and who was a great Gandhian and scholarly philosopher ended their lives when they thought they were ready to leave their body and the body was no more ready to hold them fruit-fully or meaningfully.

Why these people were fearless and why do we harbor fear of death?

To get answer for this question it is useful to appreciate the analogy an addict, addicted to alcohol, or any addictive drug.

We usually say that an addict is on wrong track. The reason is that he forgets his own life and the responsibilities towards his job, his family, his friends and society in general.

It must be appreciated that due to the error of restricted conceptualization of the human existence we become petty and pettier. But not merely that, we get addicted to the pettiness. Gradually we get so much addicted that we can-not think of anything other than our petty pursuits. Exactly like a drunkard we fail to even live without our pettiness. We fail to even imagine life without the petty gains and possessions. This is why mere thought of death, either of ourselves or that of our kin shatters us completely. We cannot tolerate it. We get wild and violent. We develop a syndrome akin to the abstinence syndrome merely by the thought of separation from this environment, which is why we develop morbid fear about our death or that of our near and dear ones.

We can rehabilitate the addict only if we are able to help him to orient himself properly with his life. This way he can come out of addiction and resume his responsibilities.

Similarly the addiction of restricted concept of human existence can be overcome by exploring and realizing the SELF. This is however very difficult. Reading and understanding of the more complete concept of human existence is only first step towards it. But once we understand the

more complete concept of human existence we gradually begin to appreciate that the innate core of our being i.e. the SELF is immortal. Subsequently, we can concentrate on that innate core as much as possible and make efforts to merge with that innate core, i.e. fountain of eternal life within us, which is exactly what is YOGA. For this, we need to make vigorous efforts and learn to focus on the same and not get entangled, sunk or stupefied by the temporary and visible events, facts and people. This is also referred to as orientation of the true self or self-realization and is associated with magnanimous and satisfying behavior.

Let us study the definitions of life, which need more imagination and subtle thinking to appreciate them. Every one may not feel comfortable with them and may not subscribe to them also. But that does not matter. They are given here only to introduce the concept of immortality. It is not necessary to believe in them. [In fact it is not advisable to believe in anything for that matter.].

NITYAGAH

NITYAM SHAREESTHA KASHNIKATVENA

GACCHATI ITI NITYAGAH.

It continues through subsequent births and hence defined as one that goes on eternally.

In contrast body is mortal. Body is called shareera. SHAREERA means one, which perishes slowly or gradually. [In Sanskrit it is defined as SHRU IRAN SHEERYATE ANENA ITI SHAREERAM].

ANUBANDHA

ANUBADHNATI AYUH APARAPARA

SHAREERADI SANYOGA ROOPATAYE

ITI ANUBANDHAH.

It is the one that is responsible for the organization of the subtle and crude components of human existence and hence called ANUBANDHA.

The KATHOPANISHAD is probably the most ancient masterpiece on life and death! KATHOPINISHAD tells

the story of the Yadnya [also spelled as yajna and means sacrificial fire] performed by son of Vajashravas and called Vajashrava and the dialogue between son of Vajashrava called Nachiketa and Yama. Swami Vivekananda the world famous monk of India was extremely fond of KATHOPANISHADA and advised his beloved associates to study it in thoroughly! If one studies it carefully, it becomes clear that study of death takes you to the knowledge of immortality!

It says

ATMANAM RATHINAM VIDDHI SHARIRAM
RATHAMEVA CHA BUDDHIN TU SARATHIM
VIDDHI MANAH PRAGRAHA ME VACHA

- KATHOPANISHAD 1.3.3

INDRIYANI HAYANARHU VISHAYASTESHU
GOCHARAN ATMENDRIYAMANOUKTAM
BHOKTE TYAHURMANISHINAH

- KATHOPANISHAD 1.3.4

The knowledgeable people know that he soul [immortal SELF] is the charioteer, body is chariot, intellect is the driver, mind is the reigns and senses are the horses and the SELF experiences the life.

ISHAVASYOPANISHADA says

VIDYAN CHA AVIDYAN CHA
YASTATVEDOBHAYAM SAH AVIDYAYA
MRUTYUM TEERTVA

VIDYAYAMRUTAMASHNUTE

-ISHAVASYOPANISHADA, 11th MANTRA

This means

The knowledge of mortal i.e. changeable reality [as the appreciation that it is transient] takes you to the knowledge of the immortal permanent field in which the contingent universe exists.

And also

SAMBHOOTINCHA VINASHANCHA

YASTATVEDOBHAYAM SAH
VINAHENA MRUTYUM TEERTVA
SAMBHOOTYAMRUTAMASHNUTE
-ISHAVASYOPANISHADA, 13th MANTRA

This means

By understanding the birth and death simultaneously the individual attains immortality.

This is further explained by following expression in KENOPANISHAD.

YAH CHAKSHUSHAM NA PASHYATI YEN
CHAKSHYUSHI PASHYATI
TADEVA BRAHMAM TAT BRAHMAM NEDAM
YADIDAM UPASATE. -KENOPANISHAD 1.6

[Incidentally it is also stated in the text book of physiology viz. The physiological basis of medical practice, By, Best and Taylor, in the chapter on neurophysiology of vision that the “seer” is not demonstrated!]

This means

You can not see the immortal SELF, or BRAHMAN by eyes [which actually means the whole elaborate physiological processes involved in the physiology and neurophysiology of vision]. In fact it is because of enlivening influence from within and outside of BRAHMAN that you can use your eyes [whole visual apparatus and visual functions] to see.

GEETA says

AVINAASHI TU TATVIDDHI
YENA SARVAMIDAM TATAM
VINASHAMAVYAYAASYA NA KASCHIT
KARTUMARHATI

- GEETA 2.17

This means

The all-encompassing cosmic consciousness is immortal. None can destroy it.

In fact there is a clear-cut exposition of mortal and immortal phenomenon in 11th to 30th stanzas in 2nd chapter of GEETA.

The meaning of following stanzas is full of solace.

JATASYA HI DHRUVO MRUTU
DHURVAM JANMA MRUTASYA CHA
TASMAT APARIHARYERTHE, NA TVAM
SHOCHITUMARHASI

- GEETA, 2.27

Everything in universe has beginning and end. Hence death [end] can be said to be universal. Hence do not grieve.

AVYAKTAIDINI BHUTANI VYAKTA
MADHYANI BHARATA
AVYAKTA NIDHANANYAIVA
TATRA KAA PARIDEVANA

- GEETA, 2.28

The immortal self exists before the beginning and after the end of physical life, which is only an interim state and hence there is no reason to grieve for its loss. This it explains the temporary as well as the permanent aspects of life and dispels our grief.

In third chapter GEETA says

INDRIYANI PARANYAHUR
INDRIYOBHYE PARMA MANAH
MANASASTU PARA BUDDHI YO
BUDDHE PARATAS TU SAH

- GEETA, 3.42

This means senses and sense organs are excellent but superior to them is mind. Intelligence is superior to mind and eternal SELF is supreme indeed!

In 7th chapter GEETA says

BHOOMIRAPONALOVAYU
KHAM MANOBUDDHIREVACHA

AHANKARAM ITYAM ME BHINNAH

PRAKRUTI ASHTADHA

-GEETA 7.4

This describes the earth, water, fire, air, sky [space], mind, intelligence and cosmic ego as the characteristic of the supreme BRAHMAN or SELF.

GEETA further assures that

JARAMARANA MOKSHAYA MAMASHRITYA

YATANTI YE TE BRAMHA TAT VIDUH KRITSNAM

ADHYATMAM KARMACHAKHILAM

- GEETA, 7.31

This means

Those who surrender themselves to ME [i.e. immortal SELF] with the purpose of liberating themselves from the shackles helplessness of senility [old age] and death, realize BRHAMN i.e. SELF i.e. the immortal essence of everything.

GEETA explains in 8th chapter,

YAM YAM VAPI SMARAN BHAAVAM

TYAJANTYANTE KALEVARAM

TAM TAM EVETI KAUNTEYA SADAA

TATBHAV BHAAVITAH

-GEETA 8.6

This means

The individual takes birth according to his/her particular contemplation at the time of leaving the body.

OMITI EKAKSHARAM BRAHMAN VYAHARAN

MAMANUSMARAN

YAH PRAYATI TYAJAM DEHAM

SA YATI PARAMAM GATIM

-GEETA8. 13

ANANYACHETA SATATAM YO MAM

SMARATI NITYASHAH

TASYAHAM SULABHAM PARTHA

NITYA YUKTASYA YOGINAH

- GEETA 8.14

The meaning of these two is that One focuses his/her attention on OMKAR i.e. supreme self within attains that abode. The nature of mortal and immortal phenomena is further described in 8th chapter as

AVYAKTAT VYAKTAYASARVA

PRABHAVATYAHARAGAME RATRYAGAME PRALIYANTE
TARAIVAAVYAKTA SANDNIKE

- GEETA 8.18

BHOOTAGRAM SA EVAYAM

BHOOTVA BHOOTVA PRALIYATE

RATRYAGAME VASHAH PARTHA

PRABHAVATYAHARAGAME

- GEETA 8.19

These two stanzas describe how everything in universe goes into potential existence [cosmic night] and manifest existence [cosmic day].

In the next stanza GEETA describes the nature of immortal SELF.

PARASTASMAT TU BHAVONYO

AVYAKTAT AVYAKTAH SANATANAH

YAH SARVESHUTESHU NASHYATSU

NA VINASHYATI

- GEETA, 8.20

The SELF is beyond seen and unseen and is immortal even as the mortal things in which it exists, perish.

In 24th and 25th stanza of the eighth chapter, GEETA de-scribes the fate of a yogi who leaves his body in and UTTARAYANA and DAKSHINAYANA. UTTARAYANA means 6 months starting from 14th January to 14th of July and DAKSHINAYANAM means 14th of July to 14th January.

AGNIH JYOTIRAH SHUKLAH SHNMASA

UTTARAYANAM TARTA PRAYATA GACCHANTI

BRAHMA BRAHMAVIDO JANAH

-GEETA 8.24

This means

A person who realizes his SELF and leaves body during the period of UTTARAYANA, during first half of the month according to Hindu calendar, during day time, when his body is healthy and when his mind is alert, then he merges with BRAHMA i.e. SELF.

And also,

DHOOMO RATRI TATHA KRISHNO

SHANMASA DAKSHINAYANA

TATRA CHANDRAMASAM JYOTI YOGI

PRAYATA NIVARTATE

-GEETA, 8.25

This means

An equally knowledgeable yogi, who leaves his body during DAKSHINAYANA, during second half of the month according to Indian calendar, during night, during ill health or weakness and mental blurring attains, a higher state after death and return to human birth again.

Again in 13th chapter also it says

BAHIRANTASHCHA BHOOTANAM

ACHRAM CHARAMEVACHA

SUKSHMATWAT TAT AVIJNYEYAM

DORASTHAM CHANTIKECHA TAT

-GEETA, 13.15

Immortal SELF is present inside as well as outside the living as well as nonliving bodies. Because of being very subtle it is beyond intellectual grasp and characteristically exists far away as well very near every being.

Death [end] of things, which are ephemeral, is certain. It always accompanies them.

This is expressed as follows.

ANITYANI SHARIRANI VIBHAVO
NAIVA SHASHVATAH NITYAM
SANNIHITO MRUTUH KARTAVYO
DHARMA SANGRAH

[This is a shloka from Avadhoot Geeta quoted in GURUCHARITRA which is one of the most revered scriptures written by Sarasvati Gangadhar and edited by Ramachandra Krishna Kamat Chandgadkar, chapter 12, p127.]

This means

Death [end] of the body and [end] of everything transient such as material possessions is constantly with us [no one can escape from it]. Hence understand and realize the SELF and the true mission of your life and accomplish it.

In nutshell, the final immortal reality is BRAHMA, called the MAHAKARAN i.e. ultimate cause and the relative or penultimate causes are KARAN DEHA or SANKALPA DEHA or LINGA DEHA and STHULA DEHA. MAHAKARAN is the subtlest and STHOOLA DEHA is the least. The body, in the next birth, is said to get organized, around the SANKALPA DEHA. This implies that we are responsible for our fate and not helpless and things work exactly in accordance with the law of KARMAPHALASIDDHANT which is discussed in a separate chapter on pages 61-65. Though this may not appear convincing as we try incessantly to fit the world and event in our limited frame of mind and conceptual framework.

It must be clear now that the problem is that of understanding the immortal existing within as well as outside our mortal body.

This can be understood even better if we understand the two ways of looking at the universe:

1] The universe is manifested from nowhere or out of nothingness. Similarly every individual when dies nothing

remains.

What is the explanation for this?

The concept of everything ends after death arises from the concept of beginning, end and zero which are real in relative sense and not in absolute sense. Thus as one thinks about crude entities the counting has validity. But when one thinks of subtler things, such as electricity conventional counting becomes redundant. Similarly when we talk about the crude i.e. body, it is true that there is beginning and end and sandwiched between the two is physical existence. But this fact which we observe in relation to body can not be extrapolated to feelings, thoughts, consciousness etc.

When we think of routine day to day affairs and in prevalent mathematics, we can and effectively use the concept of zero. However we cannot show the existence of zero at all. There is not a single place or moment when one can show or experience presence of zero.

In India also there was a school of thought named after Charvak which proclaimed that:

BHASMIBHOOTASYA DEHASYA

PUNARAGAMANAM KUTAH

Meaning thereby that once a body is cremated, there is no return at all.

The explanation in KATHOPANISHAD IS as follows.

YADEVEHA TADAMUTRA YADAMUTRA

TADANVIHA MRUTYOHO SA

MRUTYUMAPNOTI YA IHA

NANEVA PASHYATI

-KATHOPANISHAD, 2.1.10

One who does not realize that what ever is here in the body [soul or body consciousness] is also there in the universe [in the form of universal consciousness], gets trapped in the [phenomena, concepts and the feelings associated with death].

Same thing is reiterated in context of the nature of PURUSHA.

NITYAH ANITYANAM CHETANAH ACHETANANAM EKO
BAHOONAM

YO VIDADHATI KAMAN

TAMATMASTHAM YE

ANUPASHYANTI DHEERAH

TESHAM SHANTIH SHASHVATI NETARESHAM

-KATHOPANISHAD, 2.2.13

This means the constant in nonliving is same as the life in living. Those who see this get peace and not the others

2] The other view is that, world is manifested out of what one may call CHAITANYA or SUPER-LIVING, UNIVERSAL GOD, ISHVAR, PURUSHA, VISHNU, PARAMATMA, BRAHMAN. BRAHMAN “FORGETS” THE SELF AND GETS MULTIPLIED AND MANIFEST INTO MANY [PRAKRUTI as described earlier and also discussed in details in GEETA and various text books of AYURVEDA] WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY REMAINING CONSTANT. THIS IS ANALOGOUS TO “REFLECTION” BECAUSE BRAHMAN IS NOT AFFECTED AT ALL. One who realizes this attains immortality. Life is there before birth but AVYAKATA [one which is not manifest] and life is there after death but AVYAKATA or as it was before birth. Death therefore is like returning home of eternal life or to SELF.

Having taken first step to understand death and immortality, you may like to imbibe these concepts and realize the fountainhead of immortality within you. TOTAL STRESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM is an effort aimed at it.



CHAPTER 38

ARE THERE ANY OTHER CONCEPTS, WHICH GIVE RISE TO THE FEAR AND UNPLEASANTNESS OF DEATH?

I would rather call these concepts illusions. The unpleasantness and the fear of death result because of some illusions. If we get rid of these illusions out of our systems, then we can overcome the unpleasantness and fear of death to a great extent.

The first of these is the illusion of being exclusive seers or observers. No body says so. But there is somewhere in the depth of our mind that we harbor an illusion that we are the only “intelligent” observes! We are the only ones who understand the universe and there is none better than we in this respect. We have somehow cultivated a habit to undermine the others in the animal kingdom. We have be-come oblivious to the possibilities that there can be a variety of electromagnetic radiations and other stimuli to which a variety of living beings may be able to respond. We tend to forget that there can be better observers in the nature, than what we are. It has to be appreciated that there is a possibility that we are the objects seen by

others and with far greater efficiency. So we are neither exclusive nor the most efficient seers or observers!

We should get rid of, this self assumed and self styled supremacy born out of this illusion. It is important to be aware of the limitations of our body and our senses and the knowledge that is perceived through them. Our bodies and our senses have restricted capacity to fathom the universe and hence we should be humble!

It is important to be humble because, such humility can relieve us from another illusion, that there is nothing beyond the existence of our body and our senses!

In fact this illusion is one of the important causes of despair and cynicism amongst many of us. It is also the cause of bitterness and irresponsible behavior towards nature around us.

Lastly, we feel that we are the only species, which enjoys supreme consciousness. This has however no basis. We must realize that we become conscious. We do not create it! Therefore if it is there in the nature many others could as well share it and in fact it is possible that they become far more conscious than what we are. This is not wild guess-work, but a reasonable possibility, which no discerning person would like to ignore. This understanding that we can be conscious but consciousness is not “ours” gives us assurance that we have existence in the form consciousness which does not belong to our petty self and extends beyond the realm of petty sensory and intellectual realm. Since we are normally unaware of this we are feeble but the knowledge and internalization of this give us strength and assurance.

Take an example of electric bulb. The electricity from its source flows through the bulb. But the electricity, which is flowing through bulb, is not owned by it. Our petty self is like a bulb of electricity. The electricity that flows through us is cosmic consciousness. Just as the end of the bulb is not the end of the electricity so also the end of our body is not the end of this cosmic consciousness.

However in contrast to the bulb, we have the provision and option to try and unravel the link with immortal cosmic consciousness within us.

Another illusion harbored over a long time is that the levels of consciousness are the same as those described in textbooks of clinical medicine, starting from coma, semi-coma etc. to the state of alertness. In fact if we study the concepts of ANAHATA DHVANI, four VANIS or VACHAS i.e. four different levels of expression or communication, the concepts of life in KENOPANISHADA and the MANDUKYOPANISHADA, then we would be able to explore the vastness of human life and consciousness which we share with millions of others. We would explore that “our life” goes beyond the bodily life and death and the individual selves.

One more illusion is that the only ways through which we learn is by reading writing, practicing etc. The other modalities of learning are not tried adequately. There does not seem to be enough awareness that one can become increasingly aware of cosmic consciousness within and also manifest it through various ways! This has prevented us from understanding the possible beneficial influence of Pipal, Banyan, cow etc.

It has to be appreciated that according to Indian philosophy, everything classified by the modern biology as living and non-living contains that cosmic consciousness, which is referred to as God.

The illusion that everything else other than us is unconscious has never been proved at all! Yet we continue with our illusion and also our fear of losing consciousness as a result of death! As we are addicted to our individual and petty consciousness [which is actually solitary imprisonment], the death appears to be a destructive affair. Getting rid of these illusions (which is not easy) is one way to reduce the fear.



CHAPTER 39

IT IS SAID THAT THE ULTIMATE AIM OF HUMAN LIFE IS MOKSHA OR LIBERATION FROM THE CYCLE OF BIRTH AND DEATH. IF THIS IS TRUE THEN HOW DO WE EXPLAIN THE REINCARNATION OF LORD VISHNU? HOW CAN WE EXPLAIN THE REINCARNATION-RE-INCARNATION OF KRISHNA [HE ASSURES IN GEETA THAT HE REINCARNATES IN EVERY EPOCH]? OR EVEN FOR THAT MATTER DATTATREYA?

It is very true that both these concepts are present in al-most every scripture such as Vedas, Upanishadas, Smrutis, Puranas etc. In fact these are household concepts in India. Hence not only a student of philosophy but anyone and everyone is justified in asking this question.

I feel that the answer to this question can be clear if we understand the concept of MOKSHA. It is usually assumed that MOKSHA refers to a postmortem and pre-birth phenomenon. This assumption or conceptual framework is not entirely baseless. It has been developed as a result of elaborate statements and descriptions about what happens to an individual when he leaves the body. This is called GATI.

Even in Geeta GATI is described in 2nd, 6th, 8th, 13th, 14th, 16th, 17th and 18th chapters. I shall not go into the details of Geeta here as I have done it in my books on Geeta. But I would like to point out this in respect of the confusion developed with respect to the concepts of

rebirth, reincarnation and MOKASHA.

The description about what happens to an individual soul is to be seen only in respect of a certain plane of existence or a vehicle subtler than the body. This vehicle with its “movement” is GATI. But it is distinct from the characteristics of a soul or individual who passes through it. If the GATI is ADHAMA then it means the soul or an individual passing through it is ignorant and shackled. If the GATI is PARAM then the person passing through it is enlightened and liberated.

When we use the word the cycle of birth and death it refers to the ADHAMA GATI which indicates shackles of darkness and ignorance of varying degrees.

When we refer to the case of reincarnation it never means a cycle of birth and death but PARAM GATI which indicates sublime manifestation of the ultimate reality who is always in light and never in shackles of darkness or ignorance. It is referred to as DIVYA JANMA and KARMA. The Geeta has described this in 4th chapter.

Now it should be clear that a person who incarnates is already beyond cycle of birth and death even if he is physically born and is going to die physically. Secondly he is already liberated and has attained MOKSHA for which he does not have to die physically.

When the common people are advised to remember the name of God, the idea or intention is to help them to get into the increasingly higher level of enlightenment. This also is clearly stated in 6th chapter of Geeta. If this explanation does not convince you at present, then accept the explanation only provisionally and try to verify it by chanting of the name of God which usually helps in further clarification and conviction.



CHAPTER 40

UNDERSTANDING OF FIRST EIGHT CHAPTERS OF GEETA FOUND USEFUL IN THE MANAGEMENT OF CONCEPTUAL STRESS.

Geeta is a unique book in several ways.

Geeta has been a center of world culture for millennia. Geeta has been printed in hundreds of languages all over the world and literally millions of copies have reached in nooks and corners of the world. Geeta has been studied and respected and revered by towering geniuses all over the world from different religions, including Adya Shankaracharya, Dnyaneshwar, Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi and Acharya Vinoba Bhave.

These and others have written commentaries on Geeta. These commentaries also have received acclaim all over the world.

The commentaries on Geeta are further translated and interpreted also by great scholars. One can take the example of Dnyaneshwari i.e. Bhavarthadeepika.

Geeta chanting competitions are held year after year

in several parts of India and world. Several people chant Geeta daily, either completely or in part all over the world.

Geeta is extensively quoted in treatises, theses, books, re-search papers, articles, speeches etc.

GEETA YADNYAs i.e. elucidation of Geeta by the scholars in simple words are attended by thousands of people.

Geeta is possibly the only book of which anniversary is celebrated every year uninterruptedly and with utmost devotion !

Geeta is possibly the only book of which there is a temple. This temple is in Dwaraka in Gujarat. There could be more also.

Geeta is beyond religious, ideological, geographic, historical and all such boundaries or limitations. It is totally global or rather universal in its message.

Geeta is one of the greatest wonders in universe. It is one of the greatest miracles. But there is no miracle in Geeta. There is no superstition in Geeta. Instead there is revelation. There is realization.

There are no bombastic words in Geeta but it conveys THAT which is BEYOND WORDS.

It elevates our existence from pettiness to universal quality and helps us to do so for others. Thus it awakens us to the ocean of happiness and love within ourselves associated with

- A] Appreciation of universal unity, fearlessness and enthusiasm,
- B] Intellectual acuity to understand that realization of universal unity entailing inner profundity and material prosperity is TRUE HEALTH and true welfare
- C] Ability to influence policies for universal welfare.
- D] Strength and capacity to implement such policies
- E] Wisdom, valor and tenacity to fight all odds coming

in the way.

Thus understanding of Geeta can be especially useful to international bodies such as UNO, governments of all the countries in the world and private institutions / companies / multinational companies / corporations etc. to usher in TRUE HEALTH FOR ALL !

Since small and easily affordable editions of Geeta [With-out translation, with translation, with translation and interpretation etc.] are available in most of the Indian and international languages I have not included the SHOLKAs of Geeta here.

I feel confident that Geeta will grow in its importance and the respect it commands.

It will be included in all the curricula and studied all over the world increasingly thus bringing about perspective of universal unity. Such perspective will generate universally beneficial policies, plans, programmes and their implementation. These policies etc. will be in turn conducive to development of such perspective. This shall bring about development of external richness and internal profundity.

HEALTH IN FIRST CHAPTER OF GEETA

- 1] What is ARJUNAVISHADA?
- 2] What is the meaning of 'OUR' ACTIONS?
- 3] What is the meaning of 'OUR AIMS'?
- 4] How do we decide the quality of AIMS?
- 5] What was the calibre of Arjuna?
- 6] What is the nature of Arjunavishada?
- 7] What is MOHA?
- 8] Is MOHA an attribute of only ignorant, illiterate or unintelligent people?
- 9] How can MOHA become a bondage even for the learned and noble hearted ones?
- 10] Why should a philosophical poetry have this first chapter which contains descriptions of the two

armies and the MOHA of Arjuna?

- 11] What is the fall out of MOHA in day to day life?
- 12] What is selfless ness?
- 13] Then what is selflessness?
- 14] How is Arjuna vishada different from the depression that may come as a result of defiance or as a result of failure or cynicism?
- 15] How does selfishness of the masses differ from the selflessness of one person? i.e. can selfishness of the millions be equal to selflessness of a universal being?

1] What is ARJUNAVISHADA?

ARJUNAVISHADA is a complex state of mind of Arjuna in which there is combination of many feelings. Thus there is disillusionment and betrayal by the near and dear ones. There is hopelessness and despair with the thought of the outcome of the war. There is sadness because of the meanness and irresponsible behaviour of the opponents in the war. There is bewilderment with respect to his duty in such a situation. There is disgust about the thought of killing his kins and kiths leaving the women in tribulations and then enjoying the empire. There was extreme repulsion for such kind of war. There was love about the kins and kiths. There was mercy and pity about the ignorance of the opponents who had become eager to participate in such war. There was concern for the well being of society. On top of this there was intense feeling of keeping away from what Arjuna considered as barbaric war and renunciate everything if required. This state constituted a profound intellectual and emotional shock.

To understand ARJUNAVISHADA we have to understand some intricacies. Let us try to answer some questions for this.

2] What is the meaning of 'OUR' ACTIONS?

We all work. Knowingly or unknowingly and actively or passively work goes on. Our body as well as our mind - in

fact our whole existence - is full of actions. This becomes evident in the observations of biophysics, biochemistry and other related disciplines of science. Several actions and reactions are constantly going on in our body. We have no control over them to any considerable extent and we are not aware of them also. Our genotype [Genotype means the characteristics of the genes which decide the characteristics of body and nature], gestation [stay in the womb] and our environment decide these actions. It should be clear that the conscious activities and achievements are dependent on the unconscious realm of which we are not aware and which do not belong to us at all.

Thus what we consider as OUR ACTIONS and OUR ACHIEVEMENTS are in true sense not OUR.

What we consider as our PAP or as our PUNYA is actually NOT entirely 'OURS'. Similarly the PAP or CRIME of others' is also not entirely 'THEIRS'.

We are not Karta. Feeling that we are Karta brings illusory pain and illusory pleasure. It brings about bondage. It brings Vishada an urge to avoid in future or disgust of what has gone in the past [guilt] or an urge to flatter [boasting, pride], oneself for the future and past deeds which are considered as good.

3] What is the meaning of 'OUR AIMS'?

Most of us do not know their existence in its entirety. Many treat themselves as bodies alone. So fulfilment of bodily needs are the only aims.

Some go a little ahead and identify themselves with and get dictated by not only the needs of the body but also those of their instincts thus protection, sexual gratification, continuation of the family tree become an additional aims. Some go further and identify themselves emotions and emotional fulfilment in family, friends etc.

Intellectual individuals combine all above in their aims but have an additional aims of ideology either in the form religion or 'isms', traditions etc..

The pursuits of different aims go on and on with

intermittent episodes of pleasures and pains depending upon success and failures.

4] How do we decide the quality of AIMS?

Very few of us identify themselves with the lives of millions and get charged by the aspirations of the millions. Those few live entirely in the interest of the millions and their joys and sorrows spring from those of the millions. Their AIMS are truly noble.

5] What was the calibre of Arjuna?

ARJUNA THE GREATER THAN THE GREATEST SOULS:

ARJUNA'S pedestal is one of the highest pedestals one can ever reach. ARJUNA was not only selfless and lover of justice but was very valiant and ready to die for the UNIVERSAL WELFARE which is what is the essence of DHARMAYUDDHA.

Truly I salute that towering man again and again.

6] What is the nature of Arjunavishada?

ARJUNA'S VISHADA is THE ETERNAL VISHADA of all those who have 'UNIVERSAL PRAKRUTI' like that of Arjuna. When ARJUNA foresaw the gruesome tribulations and destruction of mankind that was impending as a result of the heinous war imposed by the MEANNESS and PETTINESS of his kins and kiths he was stunned.

This made ARJUNA doubtful as to whether this war was a DHARMAYUDDHA ! He saw that 'his' plans and projects born out of utmost concern for the welfare of the millions in the form DHARMAYUDDHA, were coupled with inhuman bloodshed. In other words the DHARMAYUDDHA no more remained DHARMYA or accurate. In view of the miseries of the millions he thought this particular YUDDHA was possibly too crude, incomplete, inaccurate, erroneous to be DHARMYA. He thought it could never be JUST for the whole universe. He felt that the brutal and barbaric killing of the kins and kiths on the one hand and inhuman effects following such killings on the other hand, could NOT constitute an accurate or DHARMYA

YUDDHA i.e. DHARMAYUDDHA.

He found himself in a situation where he could neither accept the war which he found totally unjust nor his own constitutional and conceptual characteristics - the bedrock - foundation - of his personality as warrior. This state which could be compared to a state of a person standing all alone on a pinhead mountain top at pitch dark night without any support or even a cue.

It is in this state of mind that ARJUNA found himself unable to decide or do anything ACCURATE.

Therefore he opted for unconditioned and total withdrawal. Thus he knowing fully well that he could lose fame, kingdom and even life at the hands of KAURAVAS, he opted to avoid what he considered as a blunder / crime.

This is why he declares that he would prefer to even die but NOT INDULGE IN SUCH WAR.

This is ARJUNA VISHADA.

7] What is MOHA?

MOHA is an altered perception of the universe, complete belief, trust or dependence in such perception. Hence it can be called delusion. But it is not the illusion or delusion the psychiatrists talk about.

It is not abnormal state of mind.

In fact it is normal faculty or characteristic of a normal state of mind.

MOHA is a perceptual error which almost every one of us commits.

We take changing reality as changeless. We take impermanent phenomena as permanent. We treat what is ephemeral as eternal. We treat what is incomplete as complete. We consider what is apparent as real.

This phenomenon of NOT SEEING THE WORLD AS IT IS is MOHA.

8] Is MOHA an attribute of only ignorant, illiterate or unintelligent people?

No. Even in case of those who have transcended their petty desires and live in the interest of millions the MOHA may still persist deep inside without awareness of those individuals.

9] How can MOHA become a bondage even for the learned and noble hearted ones?

This is because the pursuit of the welfare of the millions also does not guarantee freedom from one's own inaccurate vision / version of the welfare of the people. But such noble perspectives can be based on one important error viz. consideration of what is changing as changeless and what is incomplete as complete and what is apparent as real. This perspective MOHA is devoid of FREEDOM [enjoyed by a 'SEER without MOHA']. So aim and activities born out of MOHA has no element of true freedom. MOHA keeps us in bondage and our activities born out of MOHA bondage BANDHANA even though they may appear as good or socially beneficial.

10] Why should a philosophical poetry have this first chapter which contains descriptions of the two armies and the MOHA of Arjuna?

It is because unless a man rises to a pedestal of ARJUNA, the pedestal of total selflessness, a man would not have the genuine desire and also the ability to comprehend the VISION of GEETA.

11] What is the fall out of MOHA in day to day life?

It is the MOHA that leads to conceptual dilemma and value crisis. It is this MOHA which leads to doubts about one's duty, role or purpose of life.

Thus MOHA creates undue and misplaced hatred, love, belief, dependence or attachment. MOHA thus leads to wrong concepts, wrong decisions and wrong actions.

MOHA is responsible for DUTYLESSNESS, IRRESPONSIBILITY, LETHARGY, CRIMES and so on. MOHA is responsible for the decisions underlying major upheavals in history.

MOHA is responsible for the efforts of those indulging in nuclear weapons and MOHA is responsible for the contempt shown towards the mother nature in the pursuit of wealth and power.

But most importantly when MOHA captures a noble hearted and courageous MEN [like Arjuna], it can bring about MASS CONFUSION and MASS VALUE CRISIS and MASS SLAVERY and MASS SUBMISSION to mediocrity and / or barbarism. This can bring about cataclysms and mass destruction in every possible way to the man-kind. Because such supermen are the guiding and leading lights whom the the universe follows.

GEETA teaches us and empowers us to FIGHT and SUCCED a DHARMYA, DHARMAYUDDHA.

12] What is selfless ness?

Generally, lack of material lust for material possessions at the cost of others, is considered as selflessness. In the fore-going also the word is used with this meaning only.

But a man with endogenous depression - a mental disorder can also have 'freedom' from all desires. But that does not make him selfless. A person with severe degree of reactive depression may in fact lose the very desire to live as well. But that also is not selflessness.

13] Then what is selflessness?

Selflessness is a state, an objective reality, biological reality that makes one's life and activities UNIVERSAL.

This can be explained by a simple example.

A small child is aware of its size, knowledge etc. As it grows its transformation constitutes changes in its body, mind i.e. its existence as well as changes in its knowledge about it-self. Thus the pursuits and the actions of a child and a man differ. Geeta teaches us and helps us to evolve and rise from the shackles of our infantile attributes as well as our petty perspective and MOHA. Geeta infuses us with sap of LIFE and inner light of AWARENESS of UNIVERSAL BEING and thus multiplies the quality of our life INFINITE FOLDS. It transforms our existence from that

of a petty mediocre creature to that of a truly UNIVERSAL BEING whose heart pulsates and whose breathing goes on in synchrony with the pains and aspirations of millions.

Geeta thus cleanses us off our MOHA and enables us to take appropriate and accurate actions which is called SWADHARMA. This accurate perspective of universe and accurate planning, and actions constitute HEALTH even if physical handicaps or even diseases are present. Health is not at all absence of what are diseases or handicaps.

Some people relinquish their material possessions and go to jungles. They practice penance. Many get GURUs and enlightenment therefrom. Later they spend their lives in educating people in accordance with their visions. But it must be remembered that they do not leave their families out of frustrations and or disgust. Their act is not of running away. Their act has this abovementioned dimension of LACK OF MOHA and MAGANIMITY or UNIVERSALITY. Their pursuit is that of universal welfare.

The simple and austere lifestyle of many such people does not indicate a fancy or whim for rejecting the pleasures of life which a common man enjoys, but it indicates their involvement and priority in their characteristic pursuit.

Selflessness is thus a state of consciousness of a man. It decides the NATURE of perspective and pursuits and not the external form or nature of day to day life styles or activities which may vary from time to time and from place to place. Selflessness actually means going beyond the illusion of petty identity and identifying one's true or universal identity and or self and merging with it.

14] How is Arjuna vishada different from the depression that may come as a result of defiance or as a result of failure or cynicism?

The most important thing was that Arjuna did not want to do anything perilous for the world for the sake of material pleasures or winning the kingdom. This is exactly why his vishada was respectable and adorable for us and lovable for Lord Krishna and this is exactly why after convincing

that the particular YUDDHHA was indeed DHARMYA and when participated with dispassionate and selfless attitude could become a YADNYA, ARJUNA participated in it .

15] How does selfishness of the masses differ from the selflessness of one person? i.e. can selfishness of the mil-lions be equal to selflessness of a universal being?

Is it not true that 'wishing' material prosperity for every-one is equivaent to selflessness? How do these two views differ?

Wishing material prosperity exclusively and at the cost of others for oneself is one stage.

Wishing material prosperity exclusively for oneself at the cost of others does not ensure success or satisfaction even for that person.

Wishing material prosperity for oneself without encroaching on the possessions of others is another stage.

Wishing material prosperity it for oneself without exploitation to others is difficult because material goods do not multiply by dividing or let us say sharing ! But it at least partly ensures that some amount of missery and exppploitation is averted. But Since the situations can not be expected to be favourable at all times such sharing may go against even the 'norms' and 'convention'. It may be impossible for various other reasons as well. E.g. in a corrupt department an uncorrupt individual has to face opposition and harrasment, false charges and unjust transfers. So one lands up being rich at the cost of others at best without realising it, or may become rich monitarily but a poppoer emotionally and intellectually, because turnning deaf ears and blind eyes towards the miseries of others is the other side of such richness !

Wishing material prosperity for everyone is another stage. However, 'Wishing material prosperity' for everyone is not the 'best' wishing !

Consider a man who is rich but anxiety neurotic.

Consider a man who is rich but jealous.

Consider a man who is rich but sex maniac.

Consider a man who is rich but has developed hemiplegia. Consider a man who is rich but psychopath.

Consider a man who is rich but sterile.

Consider a man who is rich but handicapped.

These are but few possibilities.

Wishing material prosperity for everyone is utopian and impossible because there is no definition for prosperity in view of ever growing and unending individual desires/wants!

Moreover as said earlier, longing for or even bringing about material prosperity for everyone is no sign of profundity of mind !

Thus wishing and working for material prosperity for one and all which can be called LATERAL EXPANSION OF SELFISHNESS is not equivalent to selflessness.

These three types of desires can be considered as born out of TAMA, RAJA and SATVA GUNAS. These can be considered as TRIGUNATMAK perspectives [i.e. MOHA] and TRIGUNATMAK programmes and cannot heal the ailing mankind.

The vertical or inward growth associated with transformation of selfishness into selflessness results in REALIZATION OF oneness with the universe associated with attributes such as fearlessness, ecstatic effulgence of love for none in particular, but for everything and everyone, and actions to share this with the universe ! Thus this is core of life, this is core of knowledge, core of feelings and core of actions for holistic revolution or spiritual renaissance in the individual as well as the universe. This entails with it satisfaction of :

- a] Bodily pleasures, such as money, clothes, property,
- b] Sexual pleasures,
- c] Mental pleasures, parental care, associations,

friend-ships, consolations, love, encouragement,
d] Social pleasures, recognition, respect,

However, 'Wishing material prosperity' for everyone is not the 'best' wishing !

Consider a man who is rich but anxiety neurosis vishada is born out of illusion or MOHA.

Usually we tend to ridicule everything that does not fit in our frame of thinking. We tend to revere also everything that does not fit in our frame of thinking.

This is because of the illusion that bad is seen outside of us and good is also seen as outside of us. We therefore always fight to run away from bad and go to reach what is good not realizing that it is not possible to run away or to chase BAD & GOOD respectively.

The real knowledge is to recognize the universe as a continuum with one's self. So bad and good outside are seen within oneself. So no guilt and no pride. The process of NAMSMARAN facilitates this. This gives us SAMA BUDDHI and feeling of KALYANA for self and everyone. This is far too powerful than feeble and petty love or hatred. Surely through this the life transcends guilt or pride. Since we are neither great nor small as we are not KARTAS, There is no reason to have GUILT about PAPS and PRIDE about PUNYAS and about past records and future plans of purity or impurity and good or bad deeds.

HEALTH IN SECOND CHAPTER OF GEETA

- 1] What are the contents of this chapter in one sentence?
- 2] Is this chapter related to the first chapter of Geeta? Is there any continuity?
- 3] What is the meaning of the word SANKHYA YOGA which is title of this chapter?
- 4] What is VISHADA?
- 5] What is the cause of the state of VISHADA?
- 6] What is the meaning of MOHA?

- 7] How could Arjuna who is knowledgeable and noble hearted could develop MOHA?
- 8] What is the nature of this disease?
- 9] What is the effect of this disease viz. MOHA on an individual and the mankind ?
- 10] How did Lord Krishna convey His message to help Arjuna [and all of us] in overcoming MOHA?
- 11] Why could not Arjuna accept the disapproval his decision by Lord Krishna?
- 12] What was Arjuna's response?
- 13] How does Lord Krishna proceed to guide Arjuna?
- 14] Was Arjuna convinced?
- 15] How does Lord Krishna convince Arjuna?
- 16] How do we tally or compare this with modern science?
- 17] What can one do to overcome the MOHA if one can not understand and experience this?
- 18] Actually knowledge and experience of AATMAA and unity of the universe and immortality of self leave no place for hatred and enmity at all. This state is state of love, strength, fearlessness and total selflessness. In spite of this why did Lord Krishna ask Arjuna to take part in the war?
- 19] Can happiness of a mother when child is born and her sadness when child is dead, be condemned as unwise or unrealistic?
- 20] Should we give importance to only universal soul and not attach any value to the panorama of nature and life, viz. the spring, autumn, monsoon, music, drama, dances, sculptures, epics of life?
- 21] Even when we see birth, growth, health, emotions, even vision of the seers associated with their body, should we still consider the birth and death as illusions?

- 22] How do we compare advice of Lord Krishna to fight the battle and non violence?
- 23] In what way can we concede the difficult task of not expecting fruits while doing our duty?
- 24] What are the characteristics of an individual who lives in state of absolute consciousness?
- 25] What is guideline for what is good and what is bad? How should one decide one's priority of what should be done and what should be avoided?

1] What are the contents of this chapter in one sentence?

Solution or remedy for the disease of Arjuna [in fact disease of most of the people in the world] viz. MOHA. We will discuss the meaning of MOHA later in [6] .

2] Is this chapter related to the first chapter of Geeta? Is there any continuity?

Yes ! This chapter is the interaction of Lord Krishna and Arjuna that takes place after Arjuna's total withdrawal from the war in the state of VISHADA. The meaning of VISHADA also shall be explained later in [4] .

3] What is the meaning of the word SANKHYA YOGA which is a title of this chapter?

The meaning of SANKHYAA is number. Since in this vision of the universe there was consideration of the number of elements it is called SAANKHYA. The other meaning of SANKHYAA is VIVEKA DNYANA.

VIVEKA DNYANA means knowledge born out of ultimate discretionary skills or acute and accurate thinking. This was propounded by one of the greatest scholars named KAPIL thousands of years ago.

SAANKHYA vision of universe is called SAANKHYA DARSHANA.

The discussion on SAANKHYA DARSHANA is not possible in this small booklet. Suffice it to say that SAANKHYA DARSHANA is basically a systematic study

of phenomena occurring in universe and showing interrelationships amongst them.

YOGA is a word derived from the Sanskrit root Yuj which means to merge with or be one with one's true self or in common usage God, The use of the knowledge of the SAANKHYA DARSHANA to merge with the PURUSHA i.e. one's true SELF is called SAANKHYA YOGA.

PURUSHA can be understood as the subtlest, omniscient i.e. knower realm of our existence that is beyond body, mind, space and time. It is without beginning and end. PURUSHA is the KNOWER within us. When we say "we know" we should realize that PURUSHA is the ultimate knower. We feel that we are restricted individual beings and do not realize that when we see it is actually PURUSHA who sees. When we suffer it is actually PURUSHA who suffers. Where as PRAKRUTI is another subtlest omnipotent realm of our existence the causative element behind our actions. Thus when we say we do actually PRAKRUTI is doing it and as per the GUNAs.

The PURUSHA and PRAKRUTI are also called KRISHNA - RADHA, SHIVA - SHAKTI, ISHVARA - MAYA, NARAYAN - LAKSHMI etc. They are inseparable from each other.

We can take [and later discard] an approximate similitude [NOT AT ALL COMPLETE OR ACCURATE] to understand PRAKRUTI and PURUSHA PRAKRUTI is like electricity responsible for lighting the bulb. The color and illumination [KARYA i.e. effect] would depend on the characteristics [GUNAs] of the bulb viz. [glass, filament, color, wattage etc.] of the bulb. PURUSHA can be compared to a space in and around which the phenomena involved in lighting of bulb takes place. Thus, the space is passive but essential. Similarly PURUSHA is passive but essential. In addition however, in this example the space is knower space !

4] What is VISHADA?

VISHADA is a complex state that encompasses or affects one's complete existence including intellect, emotions and body.

Intellect :

There is intellectual confusion.

There is intellectual disapproval of the war on the basis of conventions and traditions and genuinely noble feelings of love, affection, kindness, social concern, selflessness and generosity.

But there is dilemma about this also. Because for a warrior it is quite painful to withdraw from war in such a way.

Emotions :

There there is disapproval, contempt, pity, forgiveness and love about the mean and lusty deeds of the opponents [Who included respectable and beloved teachers, brothers etc.]

Since this was unexpected there is a state of agony and shock !

There is sadness and a sense of despair in view of degeneration and disgraceful behavior of the respectable and beloved teachers, brothers etc. !

There is disgust for war in view of miseries of the widows of the beloved teachers, brothers etc. following the war !

There is tremendous compassion and hence readiness to sacrifice everything to avoid tribulations of the beloved ladies and their children following the war.

Body :

He has lost power in all the parts of body, mouth has be-come dry, there are tremors, there is piloerection, from paralyzed hands has become paretic and hence GANDIV BOW has got dropped, whole body is burning and inability even to stand !

Thus VISHADA is like a complex of symptoms of an underlying disease.

5] What is the cause of the state of VISHADA?

The cause or the underlying disease responsible for the VISHADA is MOHA.

6] What is the meaning of MOHA?

Awareness, alertness, attentiveness, concentration etc. are attributes of human consciousness. On the degree of consciousness depend the degree awareness, alertness, attentiveness, concentration etc., in fact all the mental, intellectual and intuitive faculties.

Thus the level of our consciousness decides “ what we sense and perceive “. Consequently our perception of the universe and self gives a perspective or understanding of our-selves and universe.

MOHA is state of lowered or veiled state level of consciousness if compared with the absolute state of consciousness.

Hence MOHA is associated with incorrect perspective of the universe and self.

7] How could Arjuna who is knowledgeable and noble hearted could develop MOHA?

Even though Arjuna is knowledgeable and great in every respect, MOHA is extremely subtle, virulent and infectious ! So even the so called healthiest individuals, greatest scholars and bravest warriors can get ‘infected’ by and suffer from MOHA. This is why Arjuna’s ‘disease’ is not merely a disease of Arjuna but that of most of us including even the greatest amongst the great !

8] What is the nature of this disease?

The disease MOHA is not a crude disease and hence never described in the textbooks of medicine ! Hence it is never treated by the doctors who are supposed to heal others.

The nature of the disease cannot be described fully.

But one can say that MOHA is associated with ERRONEOUS PERCEPTIONS of one’s identity or one’s SELF leading to MEAN or PETTY identities of religion, nation, language, race, caste etc..

9] What is the effect of this disease viz. MOHA on an individual and the mankind?

Petty identities such as country, region, village, tradition, ideology, cult, caste, etc. become prevalent in society. In addition identities such those of school, college, teachers, friends, family, spouse, children etc. and lastly one's body comforts become prevalent.

These identities acquire lot of importance. In fact these identities become governing factors of people's entire lives, thoughts, emotions and actions.

Thoughts:

Thus one can see the effects in the form of prejudiced thinking, e.g. racism, doctrines of terrorism and religious fanatics, doctrines of imperialism and exploitation, doctrine dictatorship etc.

Emotions :

Also one can see the effects in the form extreme pride, love and attachment for one's own body comforts, children, school, village, country, religion etc. and severe hatred and malice for that of the others.

Actions or behavior :

Lastly their behavior at home, at working place, in schools, colleges, play grounds, gardens, stage, dais, conferences, meetings and even and battlefields is directed by above said thoughts and emotions leading to e.g. beating children, dishonesty and irresponsibility in job, uncivilized behavior, treachery and running away from the battlefield. etc.

10] How did Lord Krishna convey His message to help Arjuna [and all of us] overcome MOHA?

In this chapter, right in the beginning, Lord Krishna simply disapproves the state of Arjuna [viz. VISHADA] as He knew it had arisen from MOHA.

Lord Krishna appeals Arjuna to rise and get rid of state which He called untimely, filthy, inappropriate, uncultured, use-less, degrading and indicative of weakness and impotence.

The Lord said this could not suit [a noble, knowledgeable,

brave and mighty warrior like] Arjuna !

11] Why could not Arjuna accept the disapproval by Lord Krishna?

Arjuna was in intractable depression and aversion for war. So he unable to come out of it and expresses his deep aversion to the war which involved besides fight against pettiness, killing of the near and dear ones including even the GURU [teachers] and the grandfather. He said that he would prefer to beg for survival rather than indulging in the bloody war.

Arjuna probably also thought that fighting against pettiness could be subconsciously full of desire of material pleasures which he loathed if they were to won in such a inhuman war.

Moreover Arjuna also felt that no one could predict the outcome of the war and even from strategic point of view it was foolish to participate in the war.

12] What was Arjuna's response?

Arjuna was in dilemma.

Whether to fight and stick to one's duty to fight against pettiness in the best interest of the universe as a warrior and participate in what he thought as heinous and hence hated war [against his will callously] respecting the duty, or to quit the war [respecting one's own emotions]?

In participating in war there would have been callous act of respecting the tradition and as well as possibility of gaining kingdom.

Where as NOT participating in war was an act of disregarding the tradition thus bringing public defamation be-sides losing kingdom thus NOT fulfilling possible subconscious desire for kingdom !

Arjuna decided not to participate in the war which involved killing near and dear ones even if it involved gain of the kingdom of heaven and earth !

But his confidence was shattered and hence was not sure about his decision. He had realized that he was

emotion-ally upset and totally baffled ! So he urged the Lord to accept him as His disciple and guide him as a GURU.

13] How does Lord Krishna proceed to guide Arjuna?

Lord Krishna explains to him that an enlightened man sees beyond the restricted vision of a common man, viz. life and death. With such a profound vision he sees immortality of the SELF and unity of the universe. Hence he does not get perturbed or shaken by death or excited by birth suggesting and helping Arjuna not to grieve due false presumption that the existences of Lord Krishna, Arjuna and the opponents were restricted by APPARENT BIRTHS DEATHS OF THE BODIES.

14] Was Arjuna convinced?

No. Arjuna was not convinced immediately at all. This is quite natural because such conviction can be possible only if one experiences the immortality of the true self referred generally by the term AATMAA. AATMAA is called SOUL.

Word AATMAA is sometimes referred to one person's soul and sometimes entire universe. When referred to the en-tire universe it becomes synonymous with PURUSHA.

If one has not experienced the IMMORTAL existence of one's and therefore universal self called as soul or AATMAA then one wonders if it is correct to dismiss absolutely natural love and happiness involved in togetherness and sorrows caused by the death [in this case killing] of near and dear ones ! One further wonders if it is right to neglect the visible individuals and believe them to be mere reflections of AN UNSEEN REALITY ! One also feels uneasy to condemn these phenomena as UNINTELLIGENT and INACCURATE !

15] How does Lord Krishna convince Arjuna?

Lord Krishna describes the immortality and other characteristics of soul. He explains that one who can

differentiate apparent things from inapparent underlying reality in the universe, does not get affected by visible or apparent things. He does not get baffled by external appearances. He [though not his body] is immortal ! Be-cause reality cannot exist in illusion and illusion cannot exist in reality as is clearly endorsed by the seers. Knowledge and experience of reality and immortality leaves no place from ignorance and mortality ! This state of knowledge and realization is indestructible. Hence it is necessary to participate in war [Do one's duty].

It is false to consider that the true self or AATMAA actually does anything because He is actually the experienter and not doer. He does not kill and does not get killed also. It is not born or and it never dies. Thus one who has this sublime experience of immortality i.e. experience of being one with the true self does not kill anybody !

The immortal self or soul really gets rid of old bodies and assembles or organizes around itself new bodies !

He is not a crude matter and hence He cannot be cut by weapons, cannot be burnt by fire, cannot be wet by water and cannot be dried by wind. He is truly beyond all this all encompassing and devoid of visible movements ! He is unmanifested and beyond imagination as He is cause of all manifestations and the ultimate imaginer Himself ! He is really indestructible in every body and hence it is inappropriate to grieve !

16] How do we tally or compare this with modern science?

Actually Rene Descartes had given a concept of body machines operated by soul ! But with increasing emphasis on experimental verification [rather than experience] the concept of soul has been dropped from textbooks of biology, though many scientists privately and publicly accept the concept.

AATMAA or eternal self is actually the state of SUPERLIFE from where manifests the life and universe.

This concept is a result of actual experience.

The experienced seers tell us [without even a grain of ulterior motive] that their bodies in fact are peripheral extensions, or reflections of SUPERLIFE i.e. AATMAA ! This is a matter of merging through one's consciousness with immortal self who is knower ! Seers appeal to experience or realize Him and not simply believe in them!

However this is not experienced and hence not easily agreed upon even by an otherwise pious human being. Hence this has an aura of mystery and most do NOT understand this AATMAA !

This is a distinct concept differing from the concept which proposes and insists evolution of life from nonliving source ! But one must realize that this proposition has neither been proved nor experienced by anyone !

Thus any honest [whether religious or not] person would always agree to the fact that he has never experienced coming from nonliving entity ! A nonliving source !

17] What can one do to overcome the MOHA if one cannot understand and experience this?

The Lord has given a simpler explanation so as to attain mental balance and not get upset. Thus the Lord advises to at least see that the births and deaths are inevitabilities and beyond the scope of anyone and hence. By this thought one should avoid getting stupefied and upset by the thought of birth and death.

Lord Krishna even explains that even simpler considerations like social dignity earned through one's duty, demanded that the war was fought ! Because war fought in the light of truth is sublime ! Whether lost or won there is infinite grace and liberation in the act itself!

18] Actually knowledge and experience of AATMAA and unity of the universe and immortality of self leave no place for hatred and enmity at all. This state is state of love, strength, fearlessness and total selflessness. In spite of this why did Lord Krishna ask Arjuna to

take part in the war?

It has to be understood that Lord not only asks Arjuna to participate in war but also insists that a warrior like Arjuna should consider such war to be a great opportunity for performing one's duty and thereby going to SWARGA i.e. heaven i.e. higher state consciousness and be very happy ! Lord Krishna has not minced words as far as giving his advice. His advice has never been equivocal at all. He never shied away from saying what He wanted to say ! He has said it with authority and utmost clarity and has insisted though in an extremely friendly manner !

He has admonished Arjuna that choosing to remain in the shackles of MOHA and turning back towards the war is tantamount to losing the SWADHARMA i.e. the very essence or the ultimate duty of an individual that takes him to truth ! The Lord affirms that such a selfless act is truly liberating ! By virtue of complementing the realization of universal unity such selfless act has no alternative !

The Lord explains that those busy in religious discussions and those busy in the rituals for riches and lavish enjoyment think that they are right, but they are headless and heartless. Hence the Lord reiterates that Arjuna should go beyond these viz. influences of three GUNAs, SATVA, RAJA and TAMA i.e. three kinds of motivating urges by virtue of which man works for petty identity and remains in bondage and get rid of such petty things such as bread winning ! The thought of petty gains fetters the consciousness !

The nature of GUNAs shall be discussed in details in book-lets on chapters dealing with them.

Lord explains experience of the immortal and universal self i.e. AATMAA, should prompt us to rise to that level where loss or gain loses meaning and selfless act itself counts ! Further when such act is done with full dedication and adeptness it is called YOGA ! Since everybody may not understand one's there were rules and regulations allotting duties to benefit the universe were present.

Unlike constitutions these regulations had been known to almost everyone in every strata of society. Following these conventions was promoting DHARMA and hence the highest duty irrespective of life and death ! SO ONE CAN UNDERSTAND THAT GEETA DOES NOT ADVOCATE CRUDE VIOLENCE BUT HIGHEST LIBERATING DUTY TOWARDS UNIVERSE AND TRUE SELF.

Hence this question is very relevant and valid !

The answer is like this !

Lord Krishna the absolute consciousness personified, is giving advice to Arjuna who is also absolute consciousness [that has become veiled] personified.

Hence advice is totally objective and in the interest of the universe. It has nothing to do with personal relationships, personal gains and personal losses. It has nothing to do with personal pains and personal pleasures.

The advice is that of absolute cosmic consciousness [rep-resented by Lord Krishna] to all the well meaning but MOHA affected elements in the universe [represented by Arjuna] about the solutions to the cosmic problems, global problems !

Lord Krishna's advice has come from a plane where there is nothing but bliss, total freedom and total selflessness ! This is an abode which is beyond the topmost pleasure of successes and or beyond the worst misery of the failures ! Hence any act performed in this state is DHARMYA i.e. conducive to universal welfare, accurate and freeing ! It cannot become the cause of bondage !

Take an example of a warrior who kills and a murderer ! Take a doctor who cuts and an assailant who cuts !

Take an example of mother's slap and that of a stranger!

It can become amply clear from these examples that it is the feeling underlying the act that is important and not merely the act itself !

If we tend to concur with Shakespear then there is

an explanation where opponents of Arjuna and Arjuna himself are the characters of villains and hero respectively. So Arjuna's role as a hero is to fight with all might the injustice and kill if necessary the opponents. He must do this perfectly because that would not actually kill those who played the role of the opponents!

Arjuna represents the love born out of ignorant notion of petty identity with biases and attachment, of narrow nature. Such biases lead to unjust wars and unjust peace ! They cause bondage !

Hence the Lord advises Arjuna ESSENTIALLY to REALIZE THE TRUTH and then participate in the war in the light of truth ! It must be appreciated that Lord Krishna's advice is cosmic benevolence and cosmic strength articulated in the best interest of the universe !! It is absolutely cogent !! There is no contradiction at all ! ! Most importantly it is valid today and till eternity.

19] Can happiness of a mother when child is born and her sadness when child is dead, be condemned as unwise or unrealistic?

No. They can not be and should not be condemned. But experience of immortal universal unity and hence universal welfare should be upheld with preference and priority.

20] Should we give importance to only universal soul and not attach any value to the panorama of nature and life, viz. the spring, autumn, monsoon, music, drama, dances, sculptures, epics of life?

In fact we start seeing these as they are if we are truly conscious and conscious of the truth ! So it is a matter of giving importance to these beautiful things and NOT negating or neglecting their importance.

If we are alienated from our true self then appreciation of the universe is erroneous, partial and false.

21] Even when we see birth, growth, health, emotions, even vision of the seers associated with

their body, should we still consider the birth and death as illusions?

Depending on our consciousness our perceptions alter. The whole crux of discussion is to see and discern between what is alive, what is dead and what is SUPERLIVING. The bodies and senses are rendered useless once they are devoid of consciousness. We see nothing and can know nothing about the seers if we don't have certain level of consciousness. Hence the insistence on realizing universal soul i.e. the center of cosmic consciousness.

This way birth, death, emotions and all sensory experiences [the immediate causes of pain and pleasure] with beginning and end can be appreciated in true and full perspective and realize that they are not absolute reality.

22] How do we compare advice of Lord Krishna to fight the battle and non violence?

Lord Krishna has given the prefect advice. He has given it with total responsibility and commitment to the welfare of mankind. It is true NON VIOLENCE.

Even if one does not understand the universal immortal soul one should realize the fact that an expert surgeon has to remove gangrenous part to save the humanbeings, similarly, Lord Krishna the healer of the mankind advised Arjuna to annihilate the opponents who had become 'gangrene' of the mankind. This is the greatest service to man-kind and true non violence.

It is common experience that whenever we develop pus in body see that it can trouble rest of the body, we volunteer for its removal. If we become sentimental because we would get pain, it can only be called neurotic.

Lord Krishna is a universal being and hence if he asks Arjuna to remove from "His universal body" then it is totally justified.

Lord Krishna never asked Arjuna to give any petty personal service for petty personal comfort !

Those who preach unqualified and crash non violence are either too sentimental, ignorant about duties of rulers and governments, or are hypocrites. Their non violence is pseudo non violence. They don't know or pretend not to know that punishment [either to reform or to deter as per the selfless judgement] given to criminals, is actually NON VIOLENCE. The pseudo non violence which they preach is counterproductive and perilous to the welfare of universe. Such utopian, unrealistic and erroneous pseudo non violence can attract some neurotics and lead to formation of sick cults and parasitic cult figures. But truly they are dangerous. Because a ruler must do his duty of imparting justice even if it incorporated ordering capital punishment [even if it appears unkind and cruel to the weak hearted]. That is true non violence. This has to be done without any personal enmity. If he falls prey to the propaganda of pseudo non violence then he would fail in his duty as a ruler.

Thus Lord Krishna's teaching ALWAYS helps us in all aspects of practical life because it is most accurate.

23] In what way can we concede the difficult task of not expecting fruits while doing our duty?

There is a lot of misunderstanding about this statement. Actually as explained in the foregoing, experiencing the universal soul is the highest achievement and all fruits appear trivial in front of it. Hence it is suggested that go beyond considerations of petty gains and petty losses pursue this highest goal. This is precisely what is not expecting fruit.

Further we must appreciate that pursuing highest goal does not mean that we should not expect a result of our activity. Every plan and project has to have projections of the results. Such projections is actually advised. Because this is skillful and meticulous working. In fact this is praised. But being attached to these results is NOT advisable. This is because there are five factors viz. ADHISHTHANA, KARTA, KARANA, CHESHTAA, DAIVA

which influence the result. These are a] Time, space and intellectual conceptualization of the work b] Performer and his abilities c] Assistance and equipments d] Actual steps taken and their sequence etc. and e] Effects of unknown cosmic interactions, respectively. One can see that there can be multiple factors in each of these category. These factors can sometimes falsify our predictions or projected results and frustrate / shatter us. To avoid this and work consistently and joyously in full swing, it is essential NOT get affected by the 'fruits'.

24] What are the characteristics of an individual who lives in state of absolute consciousness?

He does not have petty thinking and petty pursuits. In realization of immortal universal unity itself he is happy. He does not get repulsed by feeling of personal sorrows and does not get by voracious about personal gains. As a per-son he neither looks for nor hates anything. He has no attachment, fear, anger, lust about pleasnat or painful events. Being content within, he does not enter any morbid rat race for material gains to gratify himself. He overcomes difficult forces which tend to drag an individual in such things. He knows that pining for objects of pleasure leads to habits and habits lead to addictions. Addictions when not satisfied, cause rage, agony, misdirected emotions, lack of peace and unhappiness. Stunned this way this state leads to total lack of discretion and wrong actions and wrng doings. Due to loss of orientation about true self the individual goes haywire perishes. He is in awareness works of true self about which the others are unaware. He is an ocean where rivers in the form desires enter ! He remains in such peaceful state of awareness of the immortal unity even at the time of physical death, lives for ever. This is called state of BRAHMA.

25] What is the guideline for what is good and what is bad? How should one decide one's priority of what should be done and what should be avoided?

In the present context when conventions of VARNAs

have extinguished one's highest and most sublime duty or task of life is to [appreciate and spread this message of Geeta, but if it is not possible] at least try and remember that universal soul i.e. true self i.e. God or Guru, i.e. do NAMASMARAN, appreciate and experience how it helps us to experience our self, and spread the NAMASMARAN which enable us to act appropriately in our respective fields in the light of selflessness in the interest of universal welfare.

NAMASMARAN can elevate our existence from pettiness to universal quality and help us to do so for others. Thus it awakens us to the ocean of immortal happiness and love. With this experience we can appreciate a] universal unity, b] understand that universal welfare is inner growth and outer prosperity c] contribute to the planning for global welfare, d] Contribute to implement such programmes in our respective fields e] Continue our activity with wisdom, valor and tenacity.

HEALTH IN THIRD CHAPTER OF GEETA

- 1] Why is this chapter entitled KARMA YOGA? What did Arjuna think after he was told that a person united with the universal soul even at the time and death becomes immortal?
- 2] Is this dichotomy really a disease? Or is it just used metaphorecally?
- 3] How does Lord Krishna solve the dilemma of whether state of SELF realization is desirable or that of a lowly action such as war?
Whether the inner light is important or work? What remedy does He provide for the disease of DICHOTOMY between spiritual and material life?
- 4] Should the SMRUTIs be brought in force? If yes, which?
- 5] Is there any general guidance here about the nature of duty?
- 6] What is the meaning of homeostasis?

- 7] How are these concepts applicable to the duty?
- 8] What about the YADNYAs carried out where sacrifices are made?
- 9] Is it to be believed that PRAJAPATI performed a sacrifice and that is how the universe was formed?
- 10] Is it not unrealistic or far fetched to consider that the primitive ancestors had highly evolved concepts about the development of the universe? Could not PRAJAPATI as well be a primitive expression for the leader of the tribe or simply some imaginary entity in charge of reproductive power?
- 11] How to reconcile action in the service of YADNYA with the state of SELF realized individual?
- 12] What is the use of leader doing his duty?
- 13] How does it relate to Arjuna's situation?
- 14] Is there any additional social relevance to this under-standing?
- 15] What is the answer Arjuna's question as to whether the state of realization is superior or the action?
- 16] What about those who don't follow this?
- 17] But is it not obvious that people having nothing to do with Geeta have done very well?
- 18] Do not we find individuals who have not read or heard about Geeta, still doing very well, even when evaluated in the light of Geeta?
- 19] Does Lord advocate rigid controls in diet and behavior for HEALTH?
- 20] Does this mean that controls are bad?
- 21] If this is so easy to understand, how do people fall pray to lusts and temptations and commit crimes?
- 22] Is it easy to control the desires?

1] Why is this chapter entitled KARMA YOGA? What did Arjuna think after he was told that a person united with the universal soul even at the time of death becomes immortal?

This chapter is entitled KARMA YOGA because there is clarification of the doubts about KARMA [i.e action in individual life and actions at universal level] in Arjuna's mind.

Arjuna was impressed by the mental attributes of such a person who is in bliss even at the time of death and more over becomes immortal ! He thought that this is most complete and accurate definition of health. In view of such person's state of ultimate satisfaction Arjuna could not see why such a person would indulge in activities such as war.

It has to be appreciated that Arjuna represents here a great section of society which thinks that "spiritually realized" persons would always remain aloof from all worldly affairs ! In fact such aloofness and asceticism in various forms is considered by many, to be one of the prerequisites to be called a godman or saint ! This concept is commonplace because people leading a routine life tend to have a sense of guilt about indulgence in natural desires and hence feel inferior to the ascetics, who seem to control their natural desires.

In one way this is understandable. Because, lack of personal pursuits is in deed one of the prerequisites for getting realization of truth and getting unbiased knowledge.

But unfortunately this notion knowingly or unknowingly became associated with arbitrary and rigorous controls on physiological or bodily processes. Moreover this became associated with mere control of physical desires irrespective of goals [such as name, fame, money, power etc.] of personal nature.

Due to this the most important concept of using social contribution as a parameter or criteria to evaluate a person

or profession, got neglected.

Thus some strange, different and even paranormal or abnormal behaviour or some unusual feats gained importance and undue respect.

This led one set of people to SELF imposed perverted restrictions on behavior, foods etc. for being considered superior to the rest, on the one hand and led the majority of others to accept that these people were really superior.

Thus anybody who does not marry [due to sexual impotence], anybody who does not work [due to mental disorder], anybody who leaves home [due to irresponsibility to-wards family], anybody who lives in solitude away from society [to hide from society] , anybody who tortures his or her body [due to masochistic tendency i.e. tendency to torture oneSELF], and such great variety of abnormal individuals are taken as GURUs, spiritual masters and so on !

Ever since then, there has been a great chasm between spiritual and material [day to day] life, spiritual experiences, spiritual truth, laws governing the saints, demigods, godmen, religion, rituals, religious traditions such as those in various temples on the one hand and common life on the other. The religious and spiritual practices have become INACCESSIBLE and CLOSED to reason and feelings of a common man. Most of the concepts and practices branded today as religious were actually evolved for individual social welfare. But due to segregation, knowledge and perspective underlying them have been lost. Gradually the concepts and practices became excessively mystified, perverted, absurd, oppressive and exploitative.

Some followed the traditions unquestioningly irrespective of whether it were pervert, oppressive, exploitative or otherwise ! Thus blind exploitation and blind acceptance of the exploitation became prevalent. Some followed it knowingly for selfish purpose.

There were some who challenged these traditions and re-belled against them established new traditions only to be perverted later and some failed. Some tried to study the tradition and modify it without understanding what went wrong and some took resort to other religions ! Many SELF realized individuals kept the concept of realization with immortal universal unity i.e. true SELF, alive. But still this remained largely cut off from mainterm of life, i.e. economic, scientific, political, agricultural, medical, educational and varoius other fields.

SO DICHOTOMY BETWEEN THE SPIRITUAL AND THE MATERIAL LIFE IN THOUGHT AND ACTION AT INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL LEVELS LEADING TO SO MANY ILLS AND EVILS however remains even today as A DISEASE OF EVEN THE GREATEST INTELLECTUALS IN THE WORLD CULTURE ! The feeling highlighting this DISEASE, is evident in Arjuna's question as to :

whether state of SELF realization is desirable or lowly action such as war?

2] Is this dichotomy really a disease? Or the word 'disease' is just used metaphorecally?

It is a disease which is subtle and hence does not present itself as a disease. Hence it is not described in the text-books of medicine in any disciplines of medicine !

But truly speaking this IS a DIASEASE. In pscychiatry there is described disease called Schizphrenia. In simple words this is split mind. The patient lives in two realms. One is real and the other is imaginary. In the imaginary realm he may be facing a persecution or enjoying kindom ! Since these two realms are totally torn apart they cause gross and striking abnormality in behaviour.

But due to the dichotomy described above, the two worlds people live in are not torn apart. Hence the realm of 'spirituality' and realm of all other transactions in life i.e. rest of the routine go hand in hand without easily noticeable absurdity or striking abnormality in the behaviour ! But it is manifest in the form of 'spritual

and religious' traditions and customs which are followed blindly with glaring contrast in the other transactions [which are many times antisocial].

3] How does Lord Krishna solve the dilemma of whether state of SELF realization is desirable or that of a lowly action such as war? Whether the inner light is important or work? What remedy does He provide for the disease of DICHOTOMY between spiritual and material life?

In general there are two ways to understand universe and SELF.

They are a] Predominantly through intellectual and intuitive perceptions b] Predominantly through actual experiences coming while performing duties as described in the guide-lines of behavior called SMRUTIs. These are referred to as SAANKHYAYOGA and KARMAYOGA respectively.

[SMRUTI literally means memory] also referred to as DHARMA SHASTRA in the interest of the mankind. [The meaning OF DHARMASHASTRA is the systematic documentation of the principles and rules and regulations based on these principles WHICH SUSTAIN UNIVERSE so as to enable the student to benefit the universe, man-kind and himself. DHARMASHASTRA has various disciplines such as medicine, music etc. integrated in it. Hence the education which involved integrated study of these during student days was termed SHASTRA ADHYAYANA (study) and after completion of the education successfully the student was called SHASTRI.], Since we learn and refine our behavior through memory it is appropriate to call these scriptures SMRUTIs. Similarly it is very appropriate to use the word DHARMASHASTRA rather than using words like religious literature which are misleading.

In reality nobody can realize SELF by simply NOT working. This is because not a single moment is devoid of action in the universe as PRAKRUTI the omnipotent cause of actions encompasses the entire universe.

Arbitrary control of senses has no dimension of universality and hence can still leave an individual petty in his thoughts and feelings. However he, who pursues universal welfare i.e. directs his mind and lets the bodily activities and sensory experiences go on as per the situation without allowing them to affect him is perfectly correct and free in real sense. Action is inseparable part of life and hence action in the best interest of universe [YADNYA] as is depicted in the SMRUTIs should be performed without consideration to one's personal gains or losses.

This is very important for bringing spiritual or so called religious principles [if necessary after scrupulous study, grasp the essence therein and modifications in them if when and where ever required] in day to day practice.

This would begin the process of resynthesis of life at individual and social levels, thus rejuvenating it simultaneously and help us overcome the disease DICHOTOMY in individual and social life between spiritual and material life.

4] Should the SMRUTIs be brought in force? If yes, which?

No. SMRUTIs in their present form should not come in force at once.

It is true that there are many SMRUTIs and most of them are difficult to relate with, in the present social milieue and hence making choice amongst them is also not appropriate and easy.

But our aim should be to internalize the essence of the principles of SMRUTIs and bring them in all our activities an enrich ourselves spiritually and materially.

For this there should be a selfless study of SMRUTIs by scholars from different disciplines and different parts of the world. The study should include linguists, sociologists, biologists, hathayoga experts, medical doctors from different systems, economists etc. Secondly the methods of study should involve not only the surveys, observations etc., but various behavioral and meditative

conditioning techniques such as NAMASMARAN to help members the study team to overcome their biases. This way they should prepare recommendations after prolonged dialogue as to what should be accepted from the SMRUTIs [with or with-out modifications] and what not, in different regions of the world with different cultural backgrounds, for universal welfare. They should provide options and give justification for their recommendations. If they can not give justification they should concede their inability. These should be published widely so that people at large understand, appreciate their importance in day to day life.

Till such work is accomplished i.e. some accurate guidance is available about our duties in present context and how we can contribute to the welfare of the universe

through them it seems wise to rely on NAMASMARAN i. e. chanting or remembering any name that takes us closer to the realization of the universal unity.

This is because NAMASMARAN can help us understand our role in a given situation i.e. SWADHARMA and get rid of the DICHOTOMY between spiritual and material life.

5] Is there any general guidance about the nature of duty?

Yes. Lord Krishna a universal being, cosmic consciousness personified, has given indication that the universe works on the basis of certain principles as are evident in human body in the form of homeostatic mechanisms.

6] What is the meaning of homeostatic mechanisms?

Homeostasis means maintenance of internal environment in body more or less constant in which body functions optimally.

Homeostasis involves mechanisms which are called homeostatic mechanisms. All cells of body contribute to the homeostasis thus ensuring welfare of the rest of the cells and welfare of the 'whole'.

7] How are these concepts applicable to the duty in present context?

What has been suggested is that in the universe there are different planes of existences with hierarchies in terms of activity, subtlety and causativity. Events follow specific patterns and sequences like those in chemical reactions.

The techniques developed in the VEDAs were in tune with these. Hence once these are followed the COSMIC HOMEOSTASIS or universal harmony and well being is maintained and is beneficial to the 'whole' as well as 'individual'.

YADNYAs were actually not merely crude and cruel animal sacrifices as have come to be understood. They were intuitive and well thought out technical procedures with insight in the working of the universe to facilitate harmony with the various phenomena in causative planes. These planes are referred to as DEVAs. A sequence is described with respect to how BHUTANI i.e. life arises from ANNA i.e. organic substances, how ANNA .e. organic material develops from rain, how PARJANYA i.e. rain emerges from YADNYA i.e. heat including that of sun and leadnig to wild fire, and how YADNYA i.e. heat including that of sun and leadnig to wild fire is a result of KARMA i.e. number of supreme actions involved in the formation of universe. KARMA is born out of BRAHMA the subtle substratum experienced by RISHIS and BRAHMA is born out of AKSHARA the ultimate and subltest cause, the soul of the universe !

Thus the YADNYA i.e every universally benefcial activity is possible through KARMA alone and not in any other way.

Hence KARMA is advocated. But it should be done exactly as it happened while formation of universe. i.e. in the interest of the universe. In fact this is the reason why KARMA i.e. YATNA is considered as superior to PRARABDHA destiny.

Naturally Lord Krishna has said that any action

performed as a part of YADNYA without consideration to petty personal interests is the most sublime action. Anyone not participating in YADNYA came to be known as sinner.

Since the universal harmony envisaged in the YADNYAs is linked with social welfare, activities of social unity and social harmony also became accepted as YADNYAs. One of these is sharing food with others. From this point of view also a person who cooks for himSELF without sharing with others came to be considered a thief. Hence we find that many spiritual cults insist on sharing food. This is called ANNA DAANA. For universal welfare, inner feelings and social commitments are also important and hence NAMASMARAN, charity, study, yoga procedures etc. also came to be recognized as YADNYAs if and when performed in the interest of social welfare and not for petty gains, as will be discussed in HEALTH IN GEETA CHAPTER 4.

It is to be appreciated YADNYA is a remedy for the disease of DICHOTOMY between spiritual and day to day routine material life.

8] What about the YADNYAs carried out where sacrifices are made?

This is an important question. YADNYA did involve the techniques by which man could relate with various powers responsible for natural phenomena. But later these techniques seem to have fallen in the hands of those who were SELFish individuals. This lead to perversions and SELFish pursuits in the process of YADNYAs. In fact such procedures are not YADNYA to which Geeta refers.

9] Is it to be believed that PRAJAPATI performed a sacrifice and that is how the universe was formed?

I do not think that there was an individual and performed a sacrifice [as depicted in movies or television serials] and created universe. I do not expect the readers to believe in that as well. But we can conceive PRAJAPATI as time-less entity. PRAJAPATI represents the source of universe a different expression for the universal soul and

YADNYA as the processes involved in the 'formation' of universe.

The characters in many MYTHOLOGICAL and VEDIC texts are symbolic. The first hand knowledge and the concepts were destroyed. They are almost not available in their original unadulterated form. The texts which are available seem to be written subsequently either without sufficient insight in the original SHAASTRAs or describe many phenomena in cryptic manner posing difficulty in interpreting them accurately and cogently. However the human or demonic characters appearing in them and many absurdities found in them seem to clearly represent various natural phenomena.

10] Is it not unrealistic or far fetched to consider that the primitive ancestors had highly evolved concepts about the development of the universe? PRAJAPATI could as well be a primitive expression for the leader of the tribe or simply some entity in charge of reproductive power?

To consider that the ancestors were primitive is preposterous. One should consider the feats of VEDIC and MYTHOLOGICAL times. These feats defy the most advanced scientific imagination even today. Thus the elaborate ayurvedic remedies, astronomical and astrological calculations, concepts such as KUNDALINI, elaborate gram-mar of Sanskrit language, temple architectures and even the intricacies in the cuisine are some examples that disprove the notion that the ancestors were primitive. It is true that they had a different methodology and hence do not fit in the presently prevalent mode of thinking and terminology. So some believe in them as miracles while others discard them as impossible and fake claims.

But we have to realize that it is not correct to think that the progress can be made only by one and that too present way of thinking and methods of study. That is illogical delusion and blind intellectual arrogance.

Readers can take resort to a careful and unbiased

study and reveal the truth for themselves as to whether SMRUTIs / DHARMASHASTRA / GEETA can provide remedy for the disease of DICHOTOMY between spiritual and material life.

11] How to reconcile action in the service of or as a part of YADNYA with the state of a SELF realized individual?

One who works in the state of SELF realization is not bound by the work. Because he is one with the SELF i.e. the PURUSHA i.e. the experiencer who is a non doer. In other words one can also say that since he has merged with the PURUSHA actions performed by him are due to PRAKRUTI and hence not 'his'. Thus work goes on due to PRAKRUTI through him and due to this understanding that the work is not his there is nothing expected from it. Such should be the way of performing one's duties which the great Janak had performed and became one with the universal SELF.

This is total selfless work and if leaders perform it the followers are likely to follow and the Lord was doing his duty in the same light and as a leader who leads from front and by setting example. Because of inaction, petty action or perverted action of the leader can destroy the followers.

12] What is the use of leader doing his duty?

The leader works with the same intensity and involvement [though he is selfless] so that people doing their respective jobs for the universal / social welfare are not distracted and in fact encourages them to work with enthusiasm. This is very essential for the health of the 'body' of universe and 'body' of society.

Leader is a healer of disease of DICHOTOMY !

13] How does it relate to Arjuna's situation?

Merger with the experiencer [PURUSHA] would prompt Arjuna to fight war with the realization that PRAKRUTI and GUNAs cause the action of war and NOT him. He

thus would fight without pride or guilt, unlike the ignorant ones who are either proud or guilty.

14] Is there any additional social relevance to this understanding?

Yes. Those who are ignorant and in power, can become proud, arrogant, irresponsible, exploitative and treacherous and attempt all sorts of atrocities on the weak.

Those who are ignorant and weak would feel guilty due to persistent failures in everything they do and accept worst possible assaults, crimes, oppression and slavery for ever.

These are COMPLICATIONS of the disease of DICHOTOMY. These can be prevented if we do our duties with soirit of YADNYA.

15] What is the answer Arjuna's question as to whether the state of realization is superior or the action?

Lord Krishna has given clear cut indication that action per-formed in the service of YADNYA i.e. while being in SELF realized state is supreme. If this is difficult then consciously one dedicates all one's action in the feet of the Lord and consciously keeps away from its painful or pleasant fruits.

Lord HimSELF assures that those who follow this shall be liberated.

Various saints have advised that first remember the Lord i.e. the Universal being i.e. do NAMASMARAN and then do the duty as perceived since VARNAASHRAMA system and guidelines for one's duty have become extinct.

16] What about those who don't follow this?

Lord says those who don't follow this are ignorant, thoughtless and mindless. It is like a son who has forgotten the father.

It is like a part of a the universal body that has stopped receiving energy from the universal soul. The loser is the

son ! The loser is the part !

17] But is it not obvious that people having not followed the principles in Geeta at all have done very well?

Since we have developed abnormal and petty way of evaluation we consider them great. We consider them superior. This is our mistake. We should not consider the socially useless, irresponsible and antisocial elements superior. If they are given no importance and / or socially boycotted then their present appearance of being 'fortunate' will vanish. The 'aura' of greatness will be lost.

Since we are oblivious to the teachings of Geeta we commit this blunder of respecting those who make money for their petty interests. If we evaluate them from the point of view of their contribution to the universal welfare then they would be found to actually far from being fortunate. They will be found to be SICK, DISEASED. They need TREATMENT in the light of Geeta ! They do not deserve social acclaim which is being inadvertantly showered on them by us !

This can be explained in another way. Like concepts of beauty concepts of superiority are not an absolute. So concepts of fortune also are not absolute. In fact incomplete or inadequate concepts of health also are not absolute. Geeta teaches us a uniersally acceptable absolute concept which can be applied to beauty, superiority, fortune and health. If we use this concept viz. evaluation on the basis of contribution to the universal welfare i.e. thoughts and actions towards realization of SELF, then above question would never arise.

18] Do not we find individuals who have not read or heard about Geeta, still doing very well, even when evaluated in the light of Geeta?

This could very well be so especially when one considers the influences of the past life.

19] Does Lord advocate rigid controls in diet and

behavior for HEALTH?

Lord Krishna does not advocate anything abnormal. He asks only to follow one's VARNAASHRAMA DHARMA i.e. in today's context constitutional aptitudinal field in the best interest of the universe. This becomes possible with NAMASMARAN i.e. remembering Him before every action and every decision.

Further the Lord says that the behavior is as per the PRAKRUTI and hence adamant or obstinate efforts to rigorously control one's actions are illogical and unrealistic. Even knowledgeable people [can] conduct themselves [only] as per their constitution which is governed ultimately by the PRAKRUTI !

20] Does this mean that controls are bad?

This means that by virtue of the sensory gratification there is bound to be pain and pleasure. But one should not be affected by them as far as one's decision to perform SWADHARMA i.e. duty in the best interest of the universe is concerned. When this is done with the help of guidelines available in different branches of SHAASTRAs or in today's context after remembering the Lord, there is a natural and hence wise control on one's entire life and arbitrary and irrelevant control is unnecessary and some-times counter productive.

Without any direction and control in the light of SHAASTRAs or NAMASMARAN, on ambitions and de-sires, one's behavior is motivated by petty personal pursuits and involves somebody else's imitation, mindless competition with some one else in other field. This is horrible and as good as death ! Such behaviour should never be respected even if makes some one financially rich, or physically sound.

Hence for excellent natural control one should do one's SWADHARMA in the best interest of the universe, even if it looks lowly and bad ! We should learn to consider it superior and worthy of respect and reverence ! In true sense SWADHARMA is true HEALTH. Our goal should be

to attain it and we should teach this to our children as well. Even physical death while practicing SWADHARMA the highest form of health, is sublime.

21] If this is so easy to understand, how do people fall pray to lusts and temptations and commit crimes?

The answer the Lord gives is that there is influence of RAJA GUNA causing KAAMA [unending desires] which literally dictates the behavior of the individual from within by covering the knowledge of SELF inside ! It governs senses, mind and even intellect of an individual ! But if one understands that senses are superior to matter, mind is superior to senses and soul [AATMAA] is superior to mind and then remains one with the soul i.e. the knower then it is possible to bring the KAAMA i.e. desires in control.

22] Is it easy to control the desires?

No. It is not. It is not easy to remain consistently convinced that soul is superior to mind and senses. It is not easy even to understand these concepts. This is exactly why a simple procedure of NAMASMARAN is advocated so that one remembers true SELF and no additional and painful efforts are necessary to arbitrarily control the petty KAAMA ! If consciously practiced in the light of present discussion SWADHARMA and hence TOTAL HEALTH [including preventing of DICHOTOMY between spiritual and material life] can be achieved.

HEALTH IN FOURTH CHAPTER OF GEETA

- 1] What is the meaning of the title?
- 2] Is this chapter related to the third chapter?
- 3] Why was this dilemma present in Arjuna's mind even when he knew his duty as a warrior?
- 4] Is this discussion useful today?
- 5] Is the DILEMMA present in today's society as was then?
- 6] Can this question be further defined?
- 7] What is it that makes this question complicated?

- 8] What exactly constitutes the merits and demerits?
- 9] What is value crisis?
- 10] Is there any other example that would make this issue clearer?
- 11] Is the social picture so bleak?
- 12] Did Lord Krishna really refer to these phenomena which are so modern?
- 13] How does Lord Krishna provide remedy for this disease in this chapter?
- 14] [Like any open minded individual Arjuna questions] how is it possible for a person to teach this to sun who is so old?
- 15] Does not this explanation nurture fatalistic attitude and superstition?
- 16] In what way can above explanation guide us in choosing a right action?
- 17] Can we simplify the nature of actions?
- 18] Why is it said that one who sees action in inaction and inaction in action is most intelligent and accomplished YOGI?
- 19] Can we take some more examples to know how this YOGA can guide us in our day to day activities?
- 20] What about religious dictates? Are they not useful?
- 21] What about actions such as distribution of food, shelter, clothes and such other acts of charity? Are they not advisable?

1] What is the meaning of the title of this chapter?

The fourth chapter is entitled DNYAANA KARMA SANYAASA YOGA.

The meaning is :

SANYAASA [forsaking], KAMRA [actions aimed at petty gains after] DNYAANA [realisation of SELF].

2] Is this chapter related to third chapter?

Yes. In the third chapter Lord Krishna asks Arjuna to per-form actions in the light of SELF realisation and thus over-come the disease of DICHOTOMY of spiritual and material [day to day] life. But Lord realises that it is NOT easy to do this. This requires tremendous insight into the do-main of spiritual experience and its appropriate expression in day to day life. He recognises the fact that for this, additional explanation is required. So He proceeds to ex-plain some intricacies about how to choose one's actions !

3] Why was this dilemma present in Arjuna's mind even when he knew his duty as a warrior?

It is good to answer this question because that would clarify the explanations given by Lord Krishna in this chapter.

Arjuna was a learned individual. He had certain ideas about what is good and what is bad. He knew that as a warrior it was his duty to fight wars and destroy the evil elements in society. But in this situation he thought that medicine was worst than disease. He felt that the war was far too brutal and instead of providing solution would create misery for thousands. So his upbringing, learning and constitution together were posed against his personal judgement.

In this situation he found himself at loss to decide what was good and what was bad. This is because the merits seemed to involve only personal gains in terms of kingdom and respect in case of victory. Further it meant adherence to regulatory principles in the SHAASTRAs [Even though mechanically] . But demerits involved tribulations of thousands of individuals and death or rather killing of thousands. Further this involved killing of thousands of near and dear ones who were his teachers and relatives.

4] Is this discussion useful today?

This is EXTREMELY useful for everybody irrespective

of religious, ideological, regional, racial and such other superficial identities. Because by understanding Geeta everyone can choose appropriate actions to one's ultimate satisfaction.

5] Is the DILEMMA present in today's society as was then?

In today's context the dilemma has attained EVEN MORE alarming dimension and seriousness. THE DILEMMA of MAKING CHOICES has become a MAJOR DISEASE !

6] Can this question be further defined?

Yes. For this we take an example of trees and animals. As far as the trees such as mango tree are concerned, the natural growth continues and culminates in bearing fruits. Several years later the tree dies. As far as animals are concerned, they live in tune with their instincts, grow biologically, reproduce, become old and subsequently die. In these cases there are no alternatives. This means the tree or the animal is not conscious about any other option for what is going on. So there is no question of choosing one amongst many alternatives.

But in case of man there are alternatives about which he is conscious and hence faces the problem of choosing!

7] What is it that makes this question complicated?

In several circumstances there is no problem at all. Because there is vast difference between the merit and demerit or in simple words, loss and gain. Thus a question viz. "whether to put one's hand in fire or electric switch or keep away from it?" does not require a great skill of decision making.

But the problem or dilemma of choosing action becomes difficult and intriguing in many situations because the actions have merits and demerits with very thin difference. It becomes difficult to choose in such situations. For

example when the financial gains start weighing little more as compared to psychological gains in a particular issue then some may tend to choose the first and some may tend choose the second option. But both may be in dilemma because of the thought of guilt consciousness and thought of financial losses respectively !

8] What exactly constitutes the merits and demerits?

The merits and demerits are constituted by many factors. Thus usually the results of the actions which involve, profit or loss, pleasure or pain, acceptance or rejection by society, reward or punishment, concurrence or otherwise with one's conscience, lawfulness or unlawfulness, personal like or dislike, social benefit or social loss, gratification of instincts or suppression of instincts, satisfaction of urges or suppression urges, physical health or physical disease etc. Such many dualities and their permutations and combinations constitute merits and demerits. So some actions may involve gains in some ways and losses in some ways. So the merits and demerits look quite comparable and hence the decision making becomes difficult.

9] What is value crisis?

In simple words, value crisis means indecision between good and bad actions. Usually this relates to actions which are classified into sin and good deed, meritorious deed or virtuous deed. Value crisis differs from other dilemmas be-cause here decision making involves value judgement with respect to good and bad. This is not the case in many di-lemmas of trivial nature. For example choosing between two brands of perfume, soap, pickle, hair dye etc. However these issues also may be of concern for some and consultants in these fields also may be in demand !

However, where lives or deaths, losses or gains, health or disease, thinking, , beliefs, emotions, perspectives, planning, actions etc. of large number of people are affected by our actions, the value judgement is required. Our actions can be in the form of policy making, planning,

ad-ministration, implementation etc.. But to be accurate they require value judgement. So these cases where decision making is difficult and where value judgement is involved generally cause value crisis.

One example can make this clear. By virtue of the power of the media, certain advertising campaigns can create a make believe world. This can make ordinary things appear great and vice versa. This can have major impact on the thinking, beliefs and behaviour of millions. Thus advertisement of a car can make one feel that the car is a symbol of greatness. This impact can in turn mislead the people to believe that a man in such car is great even if he has a consciousness of a lizard ! Not only this, it can make the people believe that those without such a car are insignificant lowly creatures. This can cause a sense of despair and frustration in those who do not have it and or set afire a rabid desire for having it. This can lead to crimes ! On the other hand such advertisements can cause enormous pride and bloated ego in those who have it this can turn into maniacal behaviour !

Another example can also be taken. Advertisements can create an illusion that a particular fabric is a symbol of royalty ! So a woman or a man in that fabric is considered supreme even if she or he has a consciousness of cockroach! and vice versa with similar results as stated in the above example.

[As a case in point, it may be clear from these examples, that those who make these kinds of advertisements are themselves in value crisis and in turn lead to perpetual value crisis in the society].

10] Are there any other examples that would make this issue clearer?

Yes. This is with respect to values which are taught to be meritorious but which seem to suffer terrible set back.

Let us take an example of honesty. Honesty is respected on paper and in talk.

But in practice if we find that dishonesty in every form rules and crushes the honesty then this can create an agonising crisis about the validity of what is preached, taught, written and talked about honesty. This is a value crisis and makes decision making very difficult many times leading to wrong actions as explained below.

In many departments where bribing goes on as a routine honest members of the department lose money as well as their position. Because they are identified as obstruction / obstacle to bribery. So they are frequently transferred, demoted, neglected, or demoralised and humiliated in other ways. Obviously they have to suffer monetary loss as well as insult. This leads to despair and frustration. Their children are deprived of opportunities on all fronts ! The spouses are deprived of comforts ! This further adds to the despair ! This is one of the common causes of matrimonial bitterness and estrangement, divorces, alcoholism, mental breakdowns, suicides etc.. It is clear that in such a state they are in no position to contribute to the welfare of universe or society. Due to unavoidable taxation individuals are further broken into pieces.

The second option is to accept illegal money with due precaution about protection through a well knit chain. Monetary gain gives glitter and glamour. This gives easy access to 'higher' society in expensive clubs and restaurants. Through this comes capacity to accomplish successful power bargain with power brokers and acquire additional benefits. Money gives excellent opportunities of education in the best of schools, buying the best of learning aids, joining expensive careers such as medicine, engineering by paying donations, costly hobbies / professions such as travelling, fashion designing, dancing, music, skills such as judo, karate, mountaineering, horse riding, swimming, shooting not affordable for even higher middle class and games such as golf, tennis, cricket etc. which require excess of expenditure.

In addition, one can easily perform so called religious spiritual activities such as inviting rich and famous

‘godmen’, celebrating festivals and distributing laddoos to poor people in very highly publicised way and get additional name, fame and riches and blessings of the poor ! This leads to growth of the clout and further addition of illegal money can go on. They can pay all the taxes without any stress or strain because of the black buffer money and thus lead a happy life.

Honesty suffers and dishonesty conquers ! This leads to value crisis as to lead a happy life in dishonesty or suffer in honesty !

11] Is the social picture so bleak?

It is not a question of qualifying or quantifying the social picture. It is a matter of identifying the disease DILEMMA, understanding what is VALUE CRISIS, and learn the solution from Geeta.

12] Did Lord Krishna really refer to these phenomena which are so modern?

These are not modern phenomena. Their present forms are modern. Their dimensions are staggering and far more dangerous, because of the lack of guiding SHAASTRAS i.e. rules and regulations for the individual and social behaviour for the universal welfare.

13] How does Lord Krishna provide remedy for this disease in this chapter?

Lord Krishna clarifies that the YOGA i.e. solution presented here is as old as the disease. He explains that He being cosmic consciousness personified, it is He from whom this knowledge has descended to Sun, Manu, Ikshwaku, and had become extinct in the course of time.

14] [Like any open minded individual Arjuna questions] How is it possible for a person to teach this to sun who is so ancient ?

Lord Krishna explains that He and Arjuna had gone through many lives, but Arjuna had not known about it and hence He was telling the truth. Further He explains that cosmic consciousness routinely descends to protect

the good and destroy the evil from time to time whenever there is decay of the sublime principles which sustain the universe and the life in perfect harmony viz. DHARMA.

15] Does not this explanation nurture fatalistic attitude and superstition?

No. One can understand it by simple argument. Thus if life continues then phenomena in life are also bound to continue. Therefore one of the most important phenomena is that of the descent of the cosmic consciousness to heal the universe. It is a phenomenon similar to that where as a general principle, hungry animals are never left alone without food.

If we take this statement in a ridiculously simplistic sense and start waiting for some one to come and rescue us from our misery then it becomes fatalistic and superstitious. What Lord just wants to convey is that He should not be looked upon as a feeble human body but cosmic consciousness personified and has come to give the solution as He has given in the past. This He has reiterated by saying that those who understand this phenomena in true sense rise above petty needs and petty emotions, become fearless and actually merge with the cosmic consciousness. Because they have complementary eternal relationship with the cosmic consciousness referred to as God.

To explain this further Lord says, petty desires and petty actions give appropriate PETTY fruits. This goes on according to the PRAKRUTI [The laws of nature causing the universal processes which can be compared to powerhouse] and GUNAs [The basic three characteristics which are like wiring and associated voltage, electrical appliances etc.], KARMA [The actual process of supply of electricity] and VARNAs, [Which are like the characteristic different functions or effects], one leading to the next starting from subtle to crude plane of existence and amidst the cosmic consciousness. Cosmic consciousness however does not actually create or operate this whole

complex of actions.

[This is the meaning of 13 th verse in this chapter. There is no other meaning. Those who understand the meaning of the words SAAKSHI and BHOKTAA associated with PURUSHA i.e. cosmic consciousness i.e. Lord Krishna, would easily understand that this statement is in tune with SAANKHYA philosophy and does neither justify VARNASRHAMA nor claim to have produced it. It must be understand the PURUSHA is only SAAKSHI i.e. witness and BHOKTA i.e. experiencer and NOT doer. This is amply clear in 27 th and 28 th verses in third chapter, 14 th and 15 th verses in fifth chapter, substantiated in 20 th, 21 st and 31 st verses of thirteenth chapter and 19 th verse in fourteenth chapter. This explanation is specifically given for the dispelling the MYTH that Geeta justifies CHATURVARNYA i.e VARNA / CASTE system. This MYTH has been instrumental in creating bitterness, strife and riots amongst different sections of Indian society. Further, this MYTH has become instrumental in creating an illusion that Geeta preaches inequality. This has lead to negligence towards Geeta in recent times. Geeta will re-main unaffected by this but this will certainly prove detrimental to the welfare i.e. true health of mankind.]

The Lord simply wants to indicate that petty activities go on according to natural inclinations and bear appropriate fruits according to laws of nature. These things never even touch the cosmic consciousness and one who understands this truth really becomes one with the cosmic consciousness and performs his actions from that supreme plane of self realisation and selflessness. Hence he also is not bound or involved in the pettiness associated with those actions.

16] In what way can above explanation of YOGA guide us in choosing a right action?

The advice is that we should learn from the past generations who worked in for the welfare, true freedom and true health of the universe. It is difficult to understand the

fundamental nature of action and inaction. It is essential to understand that there are three types of actions. Good actions, bad actions and inaction. Good action is action for the SELF realisation. Bad action is antisocial action i.e. one which opposes the process of SELF realisation. Inaction is absence of action - apparent action.

17] Can we simplify the nature of actions?

Yes. Good action means a policy, a plan, a work THAT WOULD ENHANCE THE PROCESS OF REALISATION OF UNIVERSAL UNITY. A good action in educational field would be teach Geeta right from pre-school levels, to graduate, post graduate and post doctorate levels in all disciplines of knowledge, i.e. arts, science, commerce, management, professional colleges such medical colleges, engineering colleges etc.

Bad action in educational field would be to remove Geeta, Dnyaneshwari and such books from syllabi, include unwanted details of so called contemporary literature which can create value crisis, spreading the MYTH that Geeta preaches inequality etc.

Inaction is watching insensitively what is going on in an inert manner. Such person's indifference actually supports the bad action !

18] Why is it said that one who sees action in inaction and inaction in action is most intelligent and accomplished YOGI?

This is because the most intelligent and accomplished one i.e. a YOGI allows the nature or PRAKRUTI to take its own course without interfering with it by any petty desire. It is like a fragrance emanating from flower where the flower is not in any action ! So, there is apparent inaction. But actually all body processes and mental processes are going on in the best interest of the universe ! So like magic fragrance their impact can go millions of miles. Like a wonderful fragrance they do not affect others' bodies, but instead, leave a freeing and pleasing influence on the innate core of the hearts of the people. So a YOGI

meditating in Himalaya may appear to be in inaction. But this YOGI's apparent inaction is full of action that contributes to the welfare of universe enormously. This is how we see action in a YOGI's inaction.

On the contrary if a YOGI is seen in action then it has to be appreciated that actually the YOGI himself having merged with universal consciousness only experiences. He simply witnesses. What ever appears to be done by Him is the function of PRAKRUTI and GUNAs. Hence the YOGI sees total inaction in whatever is going on through his body and mind. So he never claims to have done any action ! Like the YOGI if we see this, then it is seeing inaction in YOGI's action.

19] Can we take some more examples to know how this YOGA can guide us in our day to day activities?

Yes. This YOGA is SELF realisation which entails the realisation of universal unity. This brings the concrete experience of global unity. This brings love for all, selflessness and bravery. This state is devoid of petty considerations, contentment, clean heartedness, petty pains and pleasures. There are several ways of achieving this stage e.g. control of breathing, control of senses, charity, penance etc. But the best is study of Geeta and get the knowledge and experience of this state. But the simplest and hence possible for everyone in the present era is NAMASMARAN i.e. remembering the universal SELF or universal consciousness by any of His name.

So the first and most accurate action today is to do NAMASMARAN and if possible study Geeta.

It must be appreciated that in absence of this state groups of people are divided into petty identities. This leads to narrow perspective, selfish planning coercive implementation of selfish plans. This leads to unleashing of counter violence in various forms or selfish and criminal activities that result as a reaction.

Hence the second most appropriate action today is to make efforts in the direction of GLOBALISING THIS STATE

AND ITS PRACTICAL EFFECTIVENESS [As is attempted in my book NAMASMARAN [English, Marathi and Hindi] and booklets on holistic health and these book-lets on HEALTH in Geeta.].

The third most urgent action would be to illustrate to every-one the concrete BEHAVIOURAL TRANSFORMATION that results in SELFLESS PERSPECTIVE, SELFLESS PLANNING, SELFLESS IMPLEMENTATION of policies and plans and REDUCTION in COUNTER VIOLENCE and REACTIVE SELFISH and CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES.

Fourth immediate action is to give every possible service [physically, financially or any and every possible way], to those who are performing above three actions.

Fifth action when and if necessary is to face the opposition, with wisdom, tenacity and valour.

All those responsible for defective planning and implementation and all those involved in counter violence and reactive crimes shall be elevated to the state of YOGA if we all try to involve ourselves in above five actions. This YOGA state is also called a state of DNYANA.

This is the knowledge one can get from accomplished master if one approaches him with total surrender of ego.

20] What about religious dictates? Are they not useful?

From the foregoing it may be clear that all religious sects are part of the universe and hence intrinsically united, though the unity is concealed. We should never ever pass our judgements in isolation. But it may be appropriate here to say that dictates from any religion in general can be scrutinised by tallying them with :

- a] the five actions described above and
- b] the goal of SELF realisation / realisation of immortal unity amongst the denizens of world and all beings in the universe.

In general ideas of condemning or flattering a sect, a

religion, a country, a race, a region, a language, or even a man in particular have to be preferentially replaced by the five actions described above.

21] What about actions such as distribution of food, shelter, clothes and such other acts of charity? Are they not advisable?

Here also it is better to tally these actions with the five actions described above and then make up one's mind. After such comparison one would find that the five actions de-scribed above have global implication and potential to heal the mankind and also other beings more completely, but may not be immediately gratifying or satisfying one's urge to do charity as the results are not evident immediately. Whereas activities referred to in this question cannot eradicate the root cause and hence cannot contribute substantially to real welfare of mankind, but give results and sense of fulfilment of one's urge to help others, immediately.

Thus it seems clear that till such time as there are needy people [including oneself !], it may not be wise to suppress one's urge to do charity [Or help oneself !] in above forms. But it is essential complement such charities [Or self help], by five actions described above with maximum emphasis. This would help us get rid of the disease DILEMMA [and VALUE CRISIS].

HEALTH IN FIFTH CHAPTER OF GEETA

- 1] What is the meaning of the title of this chapter?
- 2] Is this chapter related to the fourth chapter?
- 3] Once again the question comes : Is SANYAASA superior or YOGA?
- 4] Is there any additional specific reason for this advice ?
- 5] Can we get deeper insight in the light of this meaning SANYAASA?
- 6] What can be done to dispel the fear that such SANYAASA can lead to frustration or emptiness in

personal life?

- 7] What is the use of accepting all this in view of the fact evil seems to succeed and goodness crushed in every sphere of life?
- 8] What are the characteristics of such a SANYAASI?
- 9] Is it true that during meditation this state is achieved?
- 10] Does this mean that physical characteristics described in relation to meditative posture have nothing to do with state of a SANYAASI?

1] What is the meaning of the title of this chapter?

The meaning of the title viz. SANYAASA YOGA is the way of quitting all those activities which are aimed at petty gains.

2] Is this chapter related to the fourth chapter?

Yes. In the fourth chapter there is elaborate description on selection of accurate activities. This was to overcome the disease DILEMMA and VALUE CRISIS.

3] Once again the question comes : Is SANYAASA superior or YOGA?

This is because the word SANYAASA is commonly used to indicate renunciation from routine activities such as farming, manufacturing, cooking and so on, which are inseparable from the life.

However YOGA does not involve renunciation from these activities.

These phenomena SANYAASA and YOGA are determined by various factors including chain of subtle processes which continue through lives. These decide the nature of constitution, the surroundings as well as the character of the work [SWADHARMA] of the individual.

Thus these being apparent differences one can not be said to be superior to the other.

Lord reckons the fact that the social contribution of a YOGI i.e. who does his duty in the light of self realization

is great but also reckons the fact SANYAASAI's who live in a state of SELF realization also give the best to the world.

However Lord Krishna being cosmic consciousness personified, points at the subtle differences and indicates that the KARMA YOGA should be preferred. He implies that socially useful professional work must be done regularly and punctually.

This is because SANYAASA can involve within it arbitrary [paranormal] abstinence, impulsive suppression etc. which may manifest in some other abnormality. More over it may constitute undesirable repulsion towards life [due to inertia i.e. TAMA] which breeds parasitism. Further, external outfits can attract followers and this can corrupt the thinking of an individual. Lastly SELF realization is an inner process and not external.

This is a very important point. In today's society where there is chaos and value crisis, renunciation can become the order of the day. Amidst violence, injustice, nepotism and crimes of different nature, renunciation would manifest in the form of falling prey to narcotics, mood elevators, suicides, alcohol, crimes etc.

To avoid this : KARMA YOGA can be practiced easily as follows.

- a] Do NAMASMARAN and if possible study Geeta.
- b] Make efforts in the direction of GLOBALISING state of SELF realization and its PRACTICAL EFFECTIVE-NESS [As is attempted in my books enlisted and especially in NAMASMARAN and SAHASRANETRA and other booklets on HEALTH in Geeta.].
- c] To illustrate everyone the concrete BEHAVIOURAL TRANSFORMATION that results in SELFLESS GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE, SELFLESS PLANNING, SELFLESS IMPLEMENTATION of policies and plans and REDUCTION in COUNTER VIOLENCE and REDUCTION IN REACTIVE SELFISH / CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES.
- d] Participate in the joy of those who are performing

above three actions,

e] Face the opposition if any, with wisdom, tenacity and valor.

4] Is there any additional specific reason for this advice ?

Yes. Basically the enlightenment within is important and is possible through these apparently different ways of life. In fact, excepting those who are ignorant every knowledge-able person realizes this. Thus by following one path one gets the enlightenment common to both paths.

However there is a chance as stated above that SANYAASA in routine sense associated with renunciation may involve idiosyncrasies, frustration, depression, melancholy and in that case it would give pain and misery.

However YOGA being active in the best interest of society, ultimately leads to total enlightenment permanently. Such man though active like all other persons is totally devoid of pettiness. This is because the YOGI is pure and victorious by virtue of having a perspective and activities of universal welfare. Being one with the innate aspirations everything in universe he is never shackled by the ignorance associated with day to day activities. Further he knows that ALL the activities going on in his body are a result of constitution [PRAKRUTI] and qualities [GUNAs] and hence is quite innocent about them. Every activity has a dimension of universal emancipation. He attains true peace and NOT the sedation, daze or dizziness commonly and wrongly considered as peace.

Where as others even if they are in apparent renunciation remain in the grip of petty desires. They are in slavery of their tubular and myopic vision i.e. restricted, short sight about their goal in life.

This is a specific reason why KATMA YOGA is advocated.

5] Can we get deeper insight in the light of this

meaning SANYAASA?

Yes. Here we learn that knowledge of the experiencer 'I' and the PRAKRUTI and GUNAs gives us the concept that the activity and its results do not belong to 'I'. This knowledge is SANYAASA. It is this freedom from the false notion that 'I am doing this' and 'I am doing that'. This stage of going beyond the realm of ego is SANYAASA.

One who does not understand this has lot of petty expectations from the work, where as lack of such personal expectations from the activities is SANYAASA.

One should tally this meaning of SANYAASA in today's context. If a responsible person in power has personal expectations from activity such as preparing a policy then the activity is spoiled. Personal expectations in terms a money, privileges, power etc. in relation to that issue spoils the activity and its outcome.

Thus a prime minister, a judge, a doctor, a lawyer, a trader and any professional or employee for that matter, if under-stand and practice this meaning of SANYAASA then they would learn to overcome vested interests in their activities and become SANYAASI !

They would also appreciate that SANYAASA is not merely using some stylish clothes or performing some magic tricks. It is not strict, arbitrary and sometimes fanatic control on the body activities. Further they would grow in self confidence stop running after fake godmen in search of so called mental peace, in hope of increasing power or in expectation of fame and popularity.

Now it may be clear why the title of this chapter is SANYAASA YOGA.

6] What can be done to dispel the fear that such SANYAASA can lead to frustration or emptiness in personal life?

Such fear is because of the feeling that by simply observing bodily activities and remaining detached from them we may get converted into automatons. Further it also gives a feeling that personal and family life can

be adversely affected by this because of inadequate attention in day to day affairs. But Lord Krishna is NOT ONLY the cosmic consciousness but also COSMIC LOVE personified, teaches us to fill every activity of ours with the light SANYAASA. BECAUSE SANYAASA IS NOT A DRY STATE OF NEUROTIC WATCHFULNESS. IT IS A STATE OF OCEANIC EXUBERANCE OF LOVE and hence all small activities per-formed in the light of SANYAASA attain the dimension of YADNYA. In fact in absence of such knowledge the activities remain mean and petty and therefore devoid of the EN-CHANTING LOVE ! The activity of even a prime minister in absence of this knowledge of SANYYASA attains pettiness and meanness !

7] What is the use of accepting all this in view of the fact evil seems to succeed and goodness crushed in every sphere of life?

Actually one must realize that though we routinely seem to accept what is profitable and reject what can incur loss. This gives a false sense that we are our own masters. More-over it also gives a feeling of being good or bad according to our own limited understanding. So we start thinking that we are good and the world is bad. Sometimes if there is also a feeling that we are bad and the world is good. Some-times there is a feeling that we are bad but it is because the world bad. Under these notions we start developing opinions.

This leads to above question as to what is the use of accepting SANYAASA if 'good' is crushed and 'bad' succeeds and is worshipped?

Actually we cannot choose our parents, our genes, our constitution, our brothers, our sisters, our birth place, our motherland etc. by what we call as our free will ! If we under-stand this then it become clear that even the ability to decide what is profitable and what is not is not chosen by us, by what we call as our free will. All these things are deter-mined by the complex chains of processes going beyond life and death. They go ahead under the influence of PRAKRUTI . Whether we consider ourselves as good or

bad, successful or failures the credit or discredit is not ours. It is NOT of the universal soul also [i.e. God] who experiences and does not 'do' anything.

Further even the thought that we would accept this meaning of SANYAASA and then achieve good results is base-less and ignorant arrogance. So one need not remain under that illusion. Instead we must realize that if we are SANYAASIs of the future entrusted with the historical task [SWADHARMA] of accomplishing universal welfare WE WOULD overcome such illusions by knowledge and being pure hearted, endowed with the fortune and opportunity to understand this meaning of SANYAASA, experience freedom from ignorance and bondage and catalyze this process all over the world. Some may call this spiritual renaissance, some may call it TOTAL RENAISSANCE while others may call it TOTAL or UNIVERSAL HEALTH.

8] What are the characteristics of such a SANYAASI?

Such a man attains unshakable peace in true sense. He experiences true and same BOND of UNIVERSAL LOVE between him and a knowledgeable individual, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a person considered lowly by others. This is the ultimate perfection and this itself is BRAHMA. He is not excited or depressed by gain of desired or despised respectively. He therefore is said to know BRAHMA and live in BRAHMA. He is ecstatic from within and not seeker of external pleasures. He overcomes the stresses and strains produced by desires and anguish before physical death ! This is a state of experiencing immortal bond of UNIVERSAL LOVE. He lives for ever in this all encompassing LIGHT and BLISS.

9] Is it true that during meditation this state is achieved?

Meditation practiced for petty gains or so called mental peace is illusive. The state of mind experienced during such meditations, [even if it is associated with personal happiness or satisfaction or peace], has nothing to do with

YOGA or SANYAASA. To distinguish such neurotic states externally resembling that of SANYAASI, Lord Krishna has specified that the state of a SANYAASI is full of INFINITE LOVE and CONCERN for the emancipation of the entire universe.

10] Does this mean that physical characteristics described in relation to meditative posture have nothing to do with state of a SANYAASI?

The characteristics described are important. For example, his breathing is steady, his all mental energies focused on the area between two eyebrows. These are important, only if he has no desire [as he has achieved the highest], no fear [because he is beyond death and pain and hence has nothing to fear] and no anger [because he lives immortal love and hates nothing].

In absence of this meditation would amount only to a 'kick'! Therefore Lord Krishna has specified again and again that He is truly liberated if he knows and merges with universal consciousness, if knows and merges with the experiencer and enjoyer of all activities carried out for global welfare and if he knows and merges with THE LORD who is BELOVED BY ALL and who LOVES ALL.

Truly this state full of love and concern for everyone is the state of TRUE HEALTH. This is state of SANYAASA. This is a state from where spring thoughts and actions of universal welfare. This is a state which is characteristically beyond DILEMMA AND VALUE CRISIS!

HEALTH IN SIXTH CHAPTER OF GEETA

- 1] What is the meaning of the title of this chapter?
- 2] Is this chapter related to the fifth chapter?
- 3] Can this be achieved by a common man?
- 4] Is it true that without blessings from a Guru or God it is not possible to achieve this state?
- 5] Is it wrong to believe that God will incarnate and rectify the global situation?
- 6] What does that mean?

- 7] Can we really emancipate ourselves and help others as well?
- 8] Why solitude is required?
- 9] Why is it advised that we should sit in one position?
- 10] Is there any reason for sitting motionlessly with erect back, neck and head and focus the sight on tip of the nose?
- 11] Why only respiration and eyes are manipulated?
- 12] In addition to the techniques described above are there any other ways to consolidate the state of SANYAASA and YOGA?
- 13] Why is this state called true HEALTH?
- 14] What are the other signs of the SANYAASA which is the culmination of taming of mind, renouncing petty desires etc.?
- 15] Is not all this very difficult?
- 16] How can millions of people living in slums, pavements, tents in all sorts of troubles and worst possible scar-city or affected by violence every now and then, follow all this?
- 17] Does a person who fails to achieve this state of HEALTH, SANYAASA or YOGA land himself into a position where he loses spiritual as well as material gains and dies as a ridiculed, degraded fool?
- 18] Can this issue of rebirth be clarified?
- 19] Can we say that experience of immortality is true HEALTH?
- 20] Are there any examples of people with true HEALTH?

1] What is the meaning of the title of this chapter?

The title is AATMASANYYAMANYAASA YOGA. AATMA means self. SANYYAM means regulation. NYAASA means arrangement, laying down, or invoking deities in

different parts of body. In some editions the title is only AATMASNYYAM YOGA.

Later we will explore the meaning of this word in greater depth.

2] Is this chapter related to the fifth chapter?

Yes. In the fifth chapter the essence of SANYAASA was described and shown to be useful in day to day life. Its social implication was also discussed. Further it was shown that those of us who are entrusted by the nature to carry out the task of accomplishing TOTAL RENAISSANCE would essentially understand the meaning of the word SANYAASA. Further it was also pointed out that the SANYAASA is full of LOVE and not at all dry or indifferent as it is made out to be.

In this chapter Lord goes ahead to continue his aphorism stating that the enlightened one who performs his duty with-out expecting any petty gains is a true SANYAASI. Such SANYAASI carries out his duties without being anxious even about gains for the universe because of the knowledge and confidence. Such true SANYAASI is also a true YOGI. The Lord affirms that the individual who simply renounces his daily duties, useful for individual as well as social well being [i.e. holistic health], is not a YOGI and not a SANYAASI.

Just as the Lord has explained that without socially useful professional activities one cannot become a SANYAASI, similarly here He explains that anyone who has not renounced the petty desires CANNOT become a YOGI by simply performing the duty ! Hence SANYAASA and YOGA are in essence one and the same. If one has renounced routine life then he has to do socially useful work and one who does socially useful work must renounce the anxiety about the petty gains and even social benefits.

A man who is free from the bondage of sense pleasures as well as intellectual paradigms and hence all sorts of expectations from life, and is active in socially useful professional duty and is blissful in heart is a real YOGI

and real SANYAASI.

3] Can this be achieved by a common man?

Who is a common man? Who is ordinary? Such perceptions are only illusory. What is common now can become uncommon next moment. What is perceived as ordinary can become extraordinary next moment. An 'ordinary' person contesting for president's post and waiting for the result remains ordinary or becomes extraordinary in one moment that takes for the declaration of the result ! But apart from this if one considers more fundamental aspects then it would be clear that no one is actually common or ordinary. Only thing is either he himself or the others think so. Actually it is illusory to consider oneself or any other person common, ordinary or lowly. As has been reiterated again and again the essence of every being is supreme.

If we remind ourselves of our true nature then we would achieve the state of a YOGI and SANYAASI sooner or later.

4] Is it true that without blessings from a Guru or God it is not possible to achieve this state?

What is blessing? What is Guru? What is God?

Desire to read Geeta or try to understand Geeta is the greatest blessing and bounty, because it gives us opportunity to merge with the cosmic consciousness. The fact that we have Geeta with us means that we are already and maximally blessed by God i.e. the cosmic consciousness i.e. our innate and truest SELF ! Geeta is blessing of the Guru of the universe ! Further our Guru should not incorrectly perceived as a person, separate from cosmic consciousness ! He should be essentially correctly perceived as cosmic consciousness only. So His blessings would also be essentially the same as the teachings of Geeta.

So Geeta is the greatest blessing, richest bounty, effective remedy, strongest tonic for all of us. It is the greatest opportunity to make the most of life that we have.

The opportunity to read, listen understand and practice contents of Geeta is the highest privilege. Very existence of Geeta with us is all the reason to dance in celebration and march the way triumphantly to universal welfare !

5] Is it wrong to believe that God will incarnate and rectify the global situation?

No. It is not wrong. But it is only incorrect to misinterpret the statement and it is only erroneous not to identify God.

6] What does that mean?

It means that mistake lies in the contentions that

- a] God is entirely different and separate from us.
- b] We should passively wait for His arrival and do nothing else.
- c] Identify God with strange [and hence fraudulent] forms, and beg for mercy and blessings.

We must note that :

- a] God is NOT separate from us He is within us.
- b] We should know, experience and realize Him as our true SELF and not passively wait for his arrival.
- c] Once we realize Him which is the fountain of absolute strength we stop be begging from door to door of mercy and blessings for our welfare.

7] Can we really emancipate ourselves and help others as well?

Yes. We certainly can and we have to emancipate ourselves. We should never let ourselves sink in depression. We our-selves [our true SELF] is our friend and we ourselves [our lower nature] is our own enemy.

If we listen to illusory things and keep on doing so due compulsion of our lower nature then we land up remaining in ignorance and bondage.

If we listen to knowledge of SELF as is evident in Geeta and go on reminding ourselves about it then we ascend to

the state YOGI and SANYAASI.

One's mind if tamed becomes friendly and allows or even facilitates the process of knowledge and blissfulness.

If our mind is left uncontrolled it becomes cruel and pushes us down the hill into the shackles of ignorance and misery. If our mind has a taste of magnanimity it can help us soar in the infinite sky of our true SELF i.e. universal SELF i.e. cosmic consciousness.

If our mind has taste of only meanness then it can paralyze us to remain confined in the murky ditches of petty selfishness.

8] Why solitude is required?

Solitude is required because our mind gets affected by the minds of other. Our mind is delicate and amenable to influences. Influences of people in general are conducive to illusions. One tends to remain trapped in these illusions if they reinforced again and again. Therefore it is advised that one should remain in solitude for at least some time of the day.

9] Why is it advised that we should sit in one position?

This is because disturbs mind disturbs the breathing. This disturbed breathing is actually sign of autonomic nervous excitement. This leads to hormonal changes in body. This leads to metabolic changes in body. This is many times associated with tremors, involuntary movements, tics, spasms, fibrillations, fasciculations and some times unnecessary movements like walking, swinging legs, biting nails etc.

To counteract the untoward influence of mental disturbance on our various systems of the body the seers of the past evolved a very effective method of regulating breathing and sitting in one position at least for some time every day. Further they incorporated this daily rituals such as SANDHYAA. This procedure if consciously performed helps us to get rid of the disturbing influence

of our own mind and gradually helps us to tame it and make it friendly. It then gradually helps us realize the SELF.

10] Is there any reason for sitting motionlessly with erect back, neck and head and focus the sight on tip of the nose?

Yes. It should be appreciated that mind reflects itself in the eyes also. Therefore if mind is disturbed the eyes are either wide open, moving and reflect the feeling also. The pleasant and painful experiences and their memories affect the eyes. Therefore the seers have specifically developed techniques called as DRISHTIs. These involve the focusing of eyes on either tip of the nose or the center between the eyebrows. This procedure is associated with a concrete experience in the region between eyebrows. This helps us in overcoming the dragging and distressing influence of memories of sensual pleasures and pains.

Further, disturbing stimuli cause mental experience of discomposure. This is associated with discomposure of visual experience. The discomposure of visual experience is associated with a feeling as if visual experience is spread out or pulled apart from within. Hence the seers suggested a focusing of eyesight in the center of the eyebrows or tip of the nose. This is associated with as said above an experience of mental composure.

11] Why only respiration and eyes are manipulated?

The techniques involve modulation or regulation of those systems which are LINK between conscious and unconscious control systems. Thus respiration and eye movements can be controlled consciously as well as unconsciously. Hence breathing modulation called PRANAYAMA and focusing of eyes called DRISHTI is also practiced.

It is impossible to modulate your own ears, nose, cardiovascular system etc. at least in the initial stages of training.

12] In addition to the techniques described above are there any other ways to consolidate the state of SANYAASA and YOGA?

Yes. The food that we consume gets converted to various ingredients of the body including enzymes, hormones and neurotransmitters. These have quite a bit of influence on our thinking, feelings and our behavior. Hence Geeta advocates to avoid excessive eating and excessive fasting. It advocates moderate and appropriate eating.

Further it is also advised that excessive sleeping or skip-ping sleep altogether should be avoided. This is also be-cause there must be balance between rest and activity. If there is imbalance then that can cause either excessive sluggishness, indolence, or indigestion, metabolic disturbances and also lack of concentration, mental irritability etc..

A man with appropriate diet, behavior, activity and rest can more easily achieve and consolidate the happy state of true SANYAASA and YOGA.

This is a state which is beyond INCORRECT PERCEPTION OF THE WORLD, beyond PETTY DESIRES, beyond DILEMMA and beyond VALUE CRISIS and full of ecstasy within. In this state that even the most precious or pleasurable things cannot attract and even the most disturbing events cannot shake. Really this the true HEALTH.

13] Why is this state called true HEALTH?

The incorrect perception of world is called BHAVAROG. ROG is disease. This disease is the disease of veiling of consciousness. Hence the state when we get correct perception our SELF and world it is aptly called true HEALTH. Just as good clothes do not signify health, similarly merely good appearance of body does not signify health. Going further it can be appreciated that merely physical health is not health in absence of mental well being. Going still further it can be realized that even so called mental health also does not signify health in absence

of realization of true SELF or absolute consciousness.

We take another analogy to explain this.

Just as apparent health of merely one part of the body does not signify health of the entire body, similarly apparent health of one race, one nation or even one continent cannot signify health of the mankind. Therefore, in above described state of SANYAASA there is love for the universe, concern for the welfare of universe, it is called true HEALTH or HOLISTIC HEALTH.

14] What are the other signs of the SANYAASA which is the culmination of taming of mind, renouncing petty desires etc.?

This man is devoid of any ill feeling about anybody. He is in a state of ecstasy. He is in a happy state of communion of his essence with that of the others. He is equally concerned and involved in the welfare of every one as he knows that there can not be true welfare of few leaving the others in abyss of ignorance and misery. He sees absolute consciousness in everything and as in himself. Hence he is in essence IN absolute cosmic consciousness. Since He has transcended the barriers of ego, identities, minds and even bodies he essentially in LOVE with everything as himself !

15] Is not all this very difficult?

It is difficult. But by regular practice it becomes possible. One whose mind is shrouded by intellectual confusion, intellectual misunderstandings, intellectual arrogance, erroneous convictions, delirium of power, pride of possessions, idiosyncrasies, plethora of petty desires, obsessive uncontrolled passions would definitely find it very difficult.

This real state of HEALTH is however not impossible. Introspection, efforts to keep one's mind open, readiness to learn from experience, preparedness to think about others, recognizing that true health or welfare is not possible for any person in isolation, reading of the books such as Geeta, Dnyaneshwari, Dasabodh which teach us

about true SELF catalyze the process of acquiring true HEALTH ! Whether this is possible or not, one can chant or simply re-member the name of God. The process and its usefulness in day to day life and in social welfare is described in details in my books NAMASMARAN and SAHASRANETRA [A book on VISHNU SAHASRANAMA].

In addition to above, physical cleanliness, appropriate eating, appropriate socially useful work, adequate rest and sleep, controlled breathing, solitude for some time, keeping silence for some time etc. facilitate the process of being truly HEALTHY !

16] How can millions of people living in slums, pavements, tents in all sorts of troubles and worst possible scarcity or affected by violence every now and then, follow all this?

This question is very important. It is also true that this question could also be asked for those who are mentally retarded, who have cancer, A.I.D.S. or other devastating diseases and handicaps. It could also be asked about psychiatric patients and those in excruciating pains.

What we have to appreciate is that these have to be helped by us.

If one part of our body is not well, our whole body defense has to come in action to regain health. We can not ask that part to heal on its own. Similarly all those who are included in above question have to be perceived as part and parcel of us. They should not be left to themselves to heal on their own. We have to carry on the activities for true HEALTH exactly for their true HEALTH also.

17] Does a person who fails to achieve this state of HEALTH, SANYAASA or YOGA land himself into a position where he loses spiritual as well as material gains and dies as a ridiculed, degraded fool?

No. YOGA is a process of merger of the being / organism with the true SELF for which I coin a word SUPERLIFE to mean cosmic consciousness or Sanskrit word PARAMBHAAVA. At the time of physical death the

degree of merger of the essence continues in the next life and hence the man who has done even a small bit on this path, is never thrown into abyss of bondage, pain and ignorance. He is born in situation with appropriate qualities and continues efforts to ultimately succeed in merging with the cosmic consciousness.

18] Can this issue of rebirth be clarified?

Rebirth is always an issue that triggers controversy. So let us consider the arguments against it one by one.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST REBIRTH : Now let us compare a person, before and after his death.

A] We can not show the past life or future life.

It is true that we can not show the past or future lives. But we can just deduce some things logically and help our-selves in this matter. This has bearing on the concept of immortality and hence has to be thought over patiently and with open mind.

Let us take an example of an electric bulb.

What difference we find between a bulb when is on and when it is off?

Is there any difference with reference to the physical and chemical characteristics?

There is no difference excepting that the light which is a function of electricity has vanished.

When the bulb is off it is the electricity that has left the bulb.

When the bulb is off it is the electricity that has dissociated from the bulb.

What happens to electricity?

Does it get destroyed?

What happens to electricity if the bulb is broken?

Does it get destroyed?

Now let us compare a person, before and after his death.

What do we find?

Is there any difference in the physical and chemical elements?

There is no difference at all.

The chemical and physical reactions stop after death. These physical and chemical reactions are a function of 'electricity' which we call life.

What is it that has left the body?

This 'electricity' which we call life has left the body.

What is it that has dissociated from body?

This 'electricity' which we call life has dissociated from the body.

What happens to this 'electricity' i.e. life which has left the body?

What happens to this 'electricity' i.e. life which has dissociated from the body?

Does this 'electricity' i.e. life get destroyed after the death and decay of the body?

This 'electricity' i.e. life continues to enlighten a new 'bulb' i.e. a new body.

B] Students of biology and medicine are taught :

i] Life is associated with various processes such as growth, locomotion, reproduction, etc.

ii] Life has to be explained on the basis of physics and chemistry.

iii] There is no vital force involved in life.

iv] Like any machine using fuel physical and chemical processes go on till the switch of the machine is 'on' and once it switched 'off' the machines 'dies' for ever. There is nothing thereafter.

There are some questions :

1] Is there anything and if so what is it that determines the characteristics of healthy or unhealthy sequences of body processes in a specific individual? Is it merely accidental that some individuals are healthy and some or not? The question is not of simply answering

the mechanism of the processes, but it is that of finding out deeper causes of why a particular sequence e.g. a particular disease or mishap is present in a person A and not in B.

2] Is there anything to decide the specific sequence of events in a specific patient when efforts to resuscitate are going on ?

3] Is there anything if at all Which never gets involved with billions of sperms and ova which do not continue to live, get fertilized and culminate into organisms and which gets involved in others to culminate into organisms who may turn out to be wild animals, brave warriors, beautiful princesses or great poets?

4] Is there anything which leaves large part of the universe as non living, thus seeming to be not associated with it at all and associated with rest to make it appear living with varying degrees of consciousness?

5] What are the physical dimensions of experience of a person e.g. feelings, thoughts and consciousness? [not the biophysical substrates]

6] What are the chemical characteristics of the experience of a person e.g. feelings, thoughts and consciousness? [not the biochemical substrates]

7] Who dreams, thinks, and feels with the help of sense organs and neural mechanisms?

Here these are addressed in the light of SAANKHYA DARSHANA which explains appearance of universe and human being by the same paradigm.

Thus for universe :

There is soul [PURUSHA] who experiences. There is life [PRAKRUTI] who performs.

The body of universe is alive and not nonliving.

In universal body all the processes and phenomena categorized as living and nonliving go on.

When the body of the universe 'dies' i.e. life is separated from it the universe may disappear but universal life 'per-

forming power' [PRAKRUTI] and the universal soul the 'experiencer' [PURUSHA] continues.

These are eternal. They without beginning and without end. Similarly for man :

There is soul [PURUSHA] who experiences. There is life [PRAKRUTI] who performs. The body of man is alive and not nonliving.

In our body all the processes and phenomena categorized as living and nonliving go on.

When our body 'dies' i.e. life is separated from it, the body may disappear but our life 'performing power' [PRAKRUTI] and the our soul the 'experiencer' [PURUSHA] continues.

These are eternal. They are without beginning and without end. These are called subtler bodies associated with consciousness. We do not know their physical and chemical characteristics and any further details.

But Geeta deals with healing of life beyond the contingents of birth and death. Thus it preaches that process of true HEALTH continues and gets accomplished in the course of time. This is why some are great poets, some are warriors and some are beautiful princesses.

Again is this not fatalistic?

No. This is only knowing penultimate and ultimate causes. It has nothing to do with fatalism.

But even if it were to be so, it can not be an argument against the doctrine rebirth. But actually it is knowing the nature of chains of events life.

It is true that some people use it to justify the misery of some and in fact add to it. They have misused this doctrine to justify their own callousness. They misused the doctrine to justify their inertia which ultimately lead to stagnation in every sphere of life. This is done by narrow minded petty individuals. They have brought shame to the doctrine of rebirth. In fact it is for this reason that knowledge in itself is sacred and purify people. But knowledge when

misunderstood by undeserving and narrow people can severely harm the society. Hence knowledge should be spread with simultaneous and sufficient emphasis on purifying hearts by various procedures described for true HEALTH ! The process of being good and broad must be coupled with acquisition of knowledge.

Lord Krishna teaches us not to accept our fate passively. He empowers us to rise above the shackles of bondage of ignorance and slavery of illusion which extends lives together. Lord Krishna teaches to win freedom for this life, this universe and generations. So the HEALING we get from Geeta is far more complete than what one can ever imagine.

C] Some people question about memory of past life.

But this is absurd. Because existence of past life cannot be disproved by virtue of lack of memory of it.

For this we can consider our life in our mother's womb. We may not and actually do not remember anything from our fetal life. Does that mean that we were never fetuses?

D] Some say that we can not show past or future lives.

But can we really show our mind? Can we show our thoughts?

Can we show even what we were exactly even some time back with all the details? With all the elements in body undergoing change we cannot show our own elements of even recent past. Nothing can be shown yet we believe in these things. Going further if we see, we cannot show ourselves [not our body] !

We are because we believe we are !

Why do we believe that we are even when we cannot see or show ourselves?

It is simple. We are only conscious that we are. Nothing else. Using the same analogy immortality of life is true because one is conscious about its immortality. That is all.

E] Lastly it must be clarified once again that these matters are not to be believed in. They are to be experienced.

If we are really not aware of the fact that we ARE, if we really do not experience that we ARE then there is no sense in simply believing that we ARE !

Similarly if we really do not feel that we are immortal then there is no sense in simply believing that we are immortal ! If we really do not feel that there are penultimate and ultimate reasons for what is going on, in and around us, then there is no sense in simply believing in that !

19] Can we say that experience of immortality is true HEALTH?

Experience of immortal universal unity that fills us with unshakable triumphant love is true HEALTH, TRUE SNAYAASA and true YOGA.

This associated socially beneficial professional activities is true HEALTH, TRUE SNAYAASA and true YOGA.

20] Are there any examples of people with true HEALTH?

Absolute consciousness is in true HEALTH. We are all on its way. We all marching in that direction from station to station !

HEALTH IN SEVENTH CHAPTER OF GEETA

- 1] What is the meaning of the title of this chapter?
- 2] Is it possible to know everything in universe?
- 3] In what way is this knowledge useful for health?
- 4] Is this knowledge easy and accessible for all?
- 5] What exactly Krishna says about our existence?
- 6] Is it not unrealistic to imagine we, with our frail bodies and minds are so GREAT?
- 7] Is it the experience of the seers that this is the nature of true SELF?
- 8] How does the Lord further explain the functioning of the universe?

- 9] When Lord Krishna asserts that 'He' is the uniting link, what does it actually mean?
- 10] What about those who pray God as some one distinctly imagined?
- 11] Is it not true that Lord Krishna was also a human being? How does He say that He is present every where?
- 12] What would happen if one does not know Geeta?
- 13] What is the fate of those who pray Lord?

1] What is the meaning of the title of this chapter?

The title of this chapter is DNYAANA VIDNYAANA YOGA or simply VIDNYAANA YOGA.

This means knowledge of laws governing the universe and the reality underlying this apparent universe. Or in other words knowledge of the PURUSHA and PRAKRUTI. Or to put even more simply, knowledge of the two aspects of the universe viz. the activity and its regulation and the experience and experiencer and their relationship with us.

It can also be looked upon as description of what is constant but veiled by the inconstant and changing panorama of universe.

2] Is it possible to know everything in universe?

No. Obviously it is not possible. When we consider knowledge as seeing the facts in all the details, remembering them, recalling them, understanding them with respect to the de-tails of the mechanisms, such knowledge of universe is not possible.

Books such as Geeta do not even attempt to describe any amount of details which are dealt with great authority in other variety of books such GRAY'S ANATOMY.

Geeta does not deal with knowledge acquired by elaborate experiments, reading, observations etc.. Geeta does not deal with phenomena handled by sensory experiences and intellect. This knowledge is VIDNYAANA.

Geeta essentially though not exclusively deals with knowledge of different kind. It deals with the experience of being one with the source of the universal processes. It does not deal with simply understanding them but its total emphasis is on transcending them. It does not deal with the description of the processes or the explanations of the mechanisms underlying those processes. It deals with the experience of actually BEING at the substratum or root of the universal processes. To explain it further, it deals with not merely mental experience of some phenomena such as music, painting etc. It deals with the experience of actually being unified with the fountain from where all the universe is projected like a reflection.

It is like being sun that encompasses and causes the sun rays in the form of all universal phenomena.

What we understand by knowledge is like reading history and knowing a lot about it. The knowledge in Geeta and its experience is like being history itself of tomorrow. The knowledge in Geeta is not a documentation of an epoch, but it is an epoch making phenomenon itself.

3] In what way is this knowledge useful for health?

Geeta gives us knowledge of our true SELF which gives us health in true sense. The value of this knowledge with respect to true health can be appreciated by following examples.

Usually we accept that disease or ill health is an inadequate or abnormal functioning of our body. It is true that if a particular part of our body is not functioning then we consider that we are in ill health. Or if we have lost a particular part of body then we consider that we are in ill health.

Dysfunction or loss of one or more parts of the body is really ill health. No doubt about that. But it is possible to use prosthesis and regain the lost function to a great extent. Because it is similar to dysfunction or loss of an electric bulb. We can replace it.

Geeta teaches us to recognize the innate source of

energy which renders the dysfunction into a relatively insignificant one. Geeta teaches us to recognize that we have electricity in our 'houses' and it is therefore not correct to get bogged down loss of a bulb. We can replace it.

In addition to this there are some conditions when all the parts of the body are functioning quite well. Besides, there is no loss of any part of the body. But the problem is that our awareness about our body is incomplete or perverted. Thus in patients of hysteria, there can be an altered or perverted awareness of the body parts. This can cause feeling that parts of body such as the limbs are paralysed when in fact they have no abnormality at all ! This can cause real functional deficit to the extent that the individual cannot stand.

This is a glaring example of what can happen if the concept of the body is incomplete or deficient. This highlights the importance of the right knowledge and proper concept of body. A doctor who understands this condition can immediately provide remedy.

Similarly if knowledge or concept of our being or SELF is deficient then we live in a state akin to 'hysteria'. We remain in dysfunction both psychologically and physically. Geeta is such a doctor who can cure us by giving us proper concept of our existence.

Another example can also highlight this.

Take an example of a rich person who lives in abysmal poverty, because he does not know that his father has left a treasure for him.

What will cure his poverty?

Simply the knowledge of the fact that there is such a treasure !

His father's friend knows the secret and divulges it to him. Immediately the person's life would be transformed from poverty to richness.

But most of the times initially the person finds it difficult to believe !

Because he is conditioned to believe that he is poor !

But if an when convinced he explores the treasure and starts living with grace and dignity.

We are also similar to the rich man in above example. So we remain in petty life devoid of strength, joy and satisfaction.

Geeta divulges the secret that we have a treasure of strength, joy and satisfaction within us.

But we find it difficult to believe.

Because we are conditioned to believe that we are petty, trivial, insignificant, weak, helpless and miserable !

But if and when convinced about what Geeta says, we can go ahead to explore the treasure, get it and can start living with power, joy and magnanimity !

This is true health. Mere absence of physical discomfort is not true health.

We live with identities such as poor vendor, helpless house-maids, patients in agonies, dependent senior citizens and so on. We live as beggars, bonded labours, exploited artisans and so on. Why?

Because we have lost or forgotten the source of strength within. We have forgotten our majestic nature. We have no knowledge of universal and vibrant vitality that is ever present within us.

Geeta gives us the experience of this vibrant reality.

It gives us the realisation of our true SELF, the universal immortal unity.

If and when we explore it and experience it we start losing the petty identities and start living with vision of global unity, perspective of global welfare, intellectual efforts for global welfare in terms of socially beneficial policies, plans and programmes in our respective fields. Thus learning of Geeta is essential for individual and social health.

This is true health.

4] Is this knowledge easy and accessible to all?

This knowledge is like Everest. It is accessible to all. It does not ban anybody from coming to it. But very few reach there.

Knowledge in Geeta is exactly like Everest. It is accessible to all. It has made itself available to all. But of the thou-sands who make efforts very few get a glimpse of it or sight of it and out of those few fortunate ones, hardly any body reaches it, understands or experiences it.

5] What exactly Krishna says about our existence?

He says that true SELF, the knower, the experiencer has eight fold planes of existence, or eight aspects of existence. Earth, water, fire, wind and space, mind, intelligence and ego. This can be explained as follows.

Earth is anything that gives firmness or hardness or stability. Water is anything that gives the liquid characteristic.

Fire is actually anything gives heat, light, shock, penetration etc.

Wind is anything that gives movement.

Space is actually space and time continuum that pervades everything in and out.

Mind is the universal mind. If we consider the attributes of mind as we understand them same apply to the universal mind.

Intelligence is universal intelligence. The instrument by which the universal knower knows.

Ego is universal ego by which the knower knows that He is.

This is referred to as APARA PRAKRUTI .

It is further said that beyond this as core and controller of all these there is an entity which is called PARA PRAKRUTI. This PARA PRAKRUTI can be taken as the 'life' of all that is in APARA PRAKRUTI.

One can appreciate that this is a general characterisation of the universe as well as individuals. This concept and its variants are originally from SAANKHYA DARSHANA. Their details can be found in the texts of PADARTHA VIDNYAANA and DOSHA DHAATU MALA VIDNYAANA of Ayurveda.

From practical point of view we can conclude that our existence is not restricted to our bodies. The subtler aspects go beyond and beyond. They go beyond in space as well as beyond in time and also beyond space and time.

6] Is it not unrealistic to imagine that we, with our frail bodies and minds are so GREAT?

This, when and if merely imagined is surely unrealistic. Hence Geeta does not advise us to imagine that way. It advises us to actually experience it in the course of doing our socially useful professional duties without brooding on petty gains or losses and through constantly reminding ourselves of this phenomenon by studying Geeta regularly or chanting the name of God.

This is a matter of experience not of imagination or belief.

7] Is it the experience of the seers that this is the nature of true SELF?

Yes. It is their experience through which the DARSHANAs with minor variations but essentially the same content have come into existence. All of them discriminate between knowledge of SELF resulting into magnanimity and ignorance of SELF leading to petty identity.

8] How does the Lord further explain the functioning of the universe?

He reiterates the fact that the two PRAKRUTIs viz. APARA and PARA give rise to everything living and nonliving. This is in the background of and under the inspiration of the superliving substratum i.e. true SELF.

The PRAKRUTIs can be comprehended by an analogy.

Thus imagine that there are metallic toys having an entertaining play. These are universe.

The changes in the magnetic field which directly influence the play of the metallic toys is APARA PRAKRUTI.

The magnetic field under control of which they are playing is PARA PRAKRUTI.

The space in which the whole panorama of interactions goes on is like SELF i.e. Lord. He is a non doer, but most essential, fundamentally essential and in this sense, supreme doer.

9] When Lord Krishna asserts that 'He' is the uniting link, what does it actually mean?

As explained in the previous question, space inside us, outside us and inside others, is a continuum. Space in and out of every particle is also in continuity. If we take this analogy then we appreciate that the innate core of our beings is actually in continuity. It is a wonderful and interesting fact that this core can be experienced by us when our consciousness goes beyond the petty self.

Such experience is itself the experience of the REALITY called God, truth, AATMAA etc.

The changing world that influences the senses and mind is extremely captivating and we suffer in its slavery. This is because, we do not see the fact that our knowledge which we consider as absolute is actually a function of the anatomical and physiological characteristics of the sensory receptors and their characteristic receptivity. Thus our concept of the world and the 'concept' of the animals with different receptors is quite different. In other words our world is different from that of other beings and even other human beings is quite different. Thus there are as many worlds in the world as there are variety of different receptors in different individuals ! This is not the only thing !

The receptors change with time and age. Hence our world changes from time to time and situation ! In fact all our body cells and atoms and molecules therein change

from second to second. We are in constant flux with the surroundings through the CO₂ exhaled and O₂ inhaled. We are in constant exchange with nature through the food and water we consume and the excreta such as sweat, urine and faeces. So our notion that we i.e. our body and mind is also not a constant thing. What we consider as ourselves is in actuality in constant flux and exchange and continuity with the mass, energy, space and time in the universe. Our SELF is continuous with the SELF of the universe, rather same as that of the universe.

The symptoms of the ignorance of this fact are narrowness, selfishness, bigotry, arrogance, meekness, corruption, lying, fear, fanatic or inconsiderate attitude, hatred and so on. People live as if dragged by the horses of passions.

Those who contemplate on the Lord Krishna and worship Him intensely i.e. actually focus on their own innate core, the ultimate substratum beyond apparent universe, i.e. true SELF, live life as if riding on the horses of passions. The symptoms of the freedom and health which they experience are : Broadness, selflessness, humility, boldness, honesty, fearlessness, considerate attitude, love and so on.

This is true HEALTH. One can appreciate that our concept of health in absence of this perspective remains grossly inadequate and incomplete. When governments plan their policies to accomplish such petty health the society suffers. If we engage in pursuit of such a petty health we tend to become narrow, self centred and basically unsatisfied.

10] What about those who pray God as some one distinctly imagined?

God is worshipped by most individuals as some entity which is concerned with the overall administration of our lives. Hence they pray God when in difficulty or in need of money or sometimes out of curiosity.

But some have clear cut idea that God is the true SELF

and pray it without any expectation. They do not ask for any-thing because they know that the merging with God is in itself a greatest possible gain. They realise that 'I', true SELF, God is present in everything and everywhere as an essence. But this experience is indeed difficult.

In general, majority of the people pray gods in the form of their imaginations and for petty gains. According to laws governing the mental powers they get the desired petty gains also. But all this is also a part of God. It exists within and under control of the God that pervades everything. These people mentally immature, remain happy in the mortal pettiness. They are satisfied by trivial and limited gains thereof. Those who are mentally grown up and have become pro-found transcend the mediocrity and pettiness of every kind and pray and pine to reach the realm of infinity the SELF.

11] Is it not true that Lord Krishna was also a human being? How does He say that He is present every where?

Lord Krishna has clarified that when he refers himself as I it is not the body or mind. It is the true SELF. Throughout this text also Lord Krishna does not refer to Krishna the historical figure who is no more. It refers to the cosmic immortal reality.

The LORD declares that He is not the light so commonly perceived by bodily eyes because LORD is covered by YOGAMAYA and hence people cannot recognise Him.

12] What would happen if one does not know Geeta?

The knowledge in Geeta may come other sources. But if such knowledge is absent then it leads to spending one's life in the slavery of the illusory perceptions of oneself and universe.

13] What is the fate of those who pray Lord?

Those who take shelter in Him and take efforts with the aim of getting MUKTI i.e. freedom from bodily afflictions

or limitations such as JARA i.e. old age and MARANA i.e. death, verily know the BRAHMA, KARMA and ADHYATMA. They comprehend ADHIBHUTA, ADHIDAIVA, ADHIYADNYA and at the time death they know Him. Or we may say that they through their consciousness unravel and experience the unity with the Lord? They are called YUKTACHETASA [He, whose consciousness is merged with the universal one].

The meaning of all these terms is explained in eighth chapter of Geeta.

HEALTH IN EIGHTH CHAPTER OF GEETA

- 1] What is the meaning of the title of this chapter?
- 2] Which are these questions?
- 3] What is the meaning of these words?
- 4] What is DEHABUDDHI?
- 5] How do we acquire health through this knowledge?
- 6] How does it happen?
- 7] But how can this appeal or console us when it does not give any consideration to physical health of an individual?
- 8] In what way Geeta enables us to tackle death?
- 9] What can be done to get rid of this bondage when we are shrouded by day to day problems?
- 10] How to ascertain that what we are doing is the best?
- 11] Is this explained in other way?
- 12] Is there any reference rebirth in this context?
- 13] Is there any relevance to this from objective point of view? In other words does our consciousness have any thing to do rest of the world?
- 14] What is the use of these details for us?
- 15] Can we look up to same personalities as examples of healthy people?

1] What is the meaning of the title of this

chapter?

The title of this chapter is BRAHMAAKASHARA NIRDESHA YOGA or AKSHARA BRAHMA YOGA. Brahma is the ultimate reality which is beyond change. It is beyond formation and destruction. It is beyond degeneration. It is a 'life that enlivens' everything. Within it and on its backdrop life and death and all changes result.

The meaning of AKSHARA is one which does change over time. One which does not get regress or decrease over time. Hence the title BRAHMAAKASHARA NIRDESHA YOGA or AKSHARA BRAHMA YOGA.

Arjuna asks some interesting questions in these respects.

2] Which are these questions?

Arjunas asks Lord |Krsihna about the meaning of BRAHMA, ADHYATMA, KARMA, ADHIBUTA, ADHIDAIVA, ADHIYADNA,

3] What is the meaning of these words?

Brahma, as said earlier is the subtlest entity that is beyond space and time. ADHYATMA is our state of being in tune with BRAHMA. KARMA is the infinite number of eternal and incessant activities going on in the universe. ADHIBHUTA is everything conceivable that appears, changes and vanishes including our bodies. ADHIDAIVA is the knower in the body. The details of this can be found in KENOPANISHADA. In short when we say 'I know', it is to be appreciated it is different from the receptors, nerves, neural centres associated with knowledge. It is therefore called sensor of the sensors. Detector of the detectors. ADHIYADNYA is the process of enlightenment through which DEHABUDDHI vanishes. Lord says He Himself is this ADHIHYADNYA.

4] What is DEHABUDDHI?

Whatever we see, hear, taste, smell and whatever we feel and think is a function of specific characteristics of receptors. Thus we see only those things which reflect light

rays within a range of 400 to 700 nanometers. Whatever we hear is due to the stimulation by sound frequencies within the range of 20 to 20000 hertz. Similarly our taste and smell sensations depend on characteristics of our taste receptor cells in taste buds on tongue and olfactory neuroepithelium i.e. nerve cell receptors in our nose. General sensations such as pain, touch, temperature, pressure, movements, vibrations, acceleration etc. are felt in accordance receptors in skin and vestibular apparatus situated in the bony labyrinth of the skull. Our feelings and thoughts depend on our past experiences and training. The experiences and training work through the chemicals neurotransmitters in our brain and their interactions with neurons in the brain with characteristic and a variety of junctions between neurons called synapses.

Without going into the complicated molecular events related to the process of experiences, training, learning etc. it can be surmised that our concept of the universe and our-selves is referred to as DEHABUDDHI.

Further it has to be appreciated that most of us tend to insist that what ever is perceived or conceived by us is final reality. Such notion which remains within the confines of one's concepts, indifferent and oblivious of the further possibilities is implicit in usage of the term DEHABUDDHI.

5] How do we acquire health through this knowledge?

This is an important question. It is necessary to appreciate that DEHABUDDHI makes us weak and disabled and acts as a cause of physical ailment, accident or disease ! Hence liberation from DEHABUDDHI leads to positive health.

6] How does it happen?

Right from birth we are conditioned by the illusion that our fragmentary perceptions and conceptions are the final and complete reality. Such conditioning makes us alienated from our true SELF. This makes us centered around our

petty desires, petty feelings and petty ambitions. This keeps us tubular in vision and adamant by nature. Due to the chasms between our own inner source of energy it makes us feeble, weak and disabled as compared to our actual capacity. Our performances remain far below standard due to negligence towards untapped potential. It keeps us separated from the nectar of love that binds us with rest of the world and keeps us dry and cynical. These are all responsible for derangement in our feelings, thinking and actions in private and public life.

Hence transcending this can help us become stronger, free and joyous i.e. healthier. It is like getting metamorphosed from the state of cocoon to butterfly.

Or it is like getting connected with the inner source of energy. Surely this is associated with strength, freedom and joy. It gives us ability of broader vision, profound thoughts, generous feelings. It gives us vigour and enthusiasm for accurate actions in personal and social life. This in turn gives us greater and greater sense of fulfilment.

This is true health.

7] But how can this appeal or console us when it does not give any consideration to physical health of an individual?

Physical health is of great concern to every one of us. There is no doubt about that. Treatment of physical ailments is essential.

But acquiring physical health becomes difficult and inadequate in absence of the insight which we get in Geeta. Thus if we are to merely treat our bodies then it amounts to being vegetative. Even plants respond to external stimuli such as light, water etc.. The animals respond to stimuli such as pain by withdrawal reflex, licking the wound etc.. These responses are aimed at protecting healing respectively.

But the expanse of human life cannot NOT be so limited. It cannot be restricted to this. We cannot not lead

vegetative life even if we wish to. This is because we are conscious. ! Hence miseries associated with conscious consciousness are integral part of being. In one way we are victims of our own consciousness. Thus our miseries can not end with acquisition of mere physical health. Our miseries are psychological, social, political, environmental and so on. They make our life pitiable even in the midst of individual physical health.

Second point is that many physical diseases such as those resulting from lack of information, lack of proper nutrition, lack of supply of safe drinking water, overcrowding, traffic accidents CAN NOT be prevented UNLESS con-tents of Geeta are grasped, internalised and implemented by policy makers and administrators in all the fields be-sides that of health and healing.

Thirdly policies and plans in the field in the field of health, health education and medical care remain deficient and inadequate due to ignorance of Geeta.

Thus ignorance of Geeta leads to utter negligence towards the concepts of AYURVEDA, YOGA and traditional wisdom in ancient literature. It leads to utter negligence towards the indigenous herbal and traditional medicines. It leads to blind promotion of alien systems of education and healing at the cost of peoples' physical health and wealth too.

Fourthly there are several physical diseases for which there is no cure. In such diseases the most important thing is our emotional and intellectual response to the physical ailments. Moreover our response to the physical and incurable ailments of our near and dear ones is also important. This can be greatly improved by knowledge of Geeta.

Fifthly if we look at death as a ultimately serious physical disease then Geeta teaches us the right way to handle it also.

Lastly it should be noted that there are plenty of treatises which deal with maintenance and promotion

of health and prevention and treatment of physical and mental diseases which are of great value and can prove to be of far greater value when studied and practised in the light of Geeta.

8] In what way Geeta enables us to tackle death?

Geeta enables us to tackle death in two ways.

a] Geeta infuses us with the insight viz. we are in essence immortal as explained in chapter 2 of Geeta.

b] Geeta teaches in this chapter that if we pray i.e. internally connect ourselves with our innate core i.e. Lord, then at time of death we remain in tune with or in direct continuity with the immortal SELF i.e. God. Thus Geeta teaches us the truth we have forgotten viz. that we are immortal and Geeta teaches us also how to overcome the death and live eternally in the awareness of the immortal and eternal universal consciousness viz. Lord, God, Brahma.

What can happen if one dies in ignorance of knowledge in Geeta?

Knowledge in Geeta can come by listening, reading, studying, meditation and many ways including one of the most important viz. NAMASMARAN i.e. remembering the name of God.

In absence of it core of our existence continues to 'live' in the shackles of illusions and acquires bodies according to those illusions and desires called VAASANA, SANKALPA etc.. This is life in bondage.

9] What can be done to get rid of this bondage when we are shrouded by day to day problems?

We should try to contemplate on the innermost core of our existence and do our best in our professions, service, business etc.

10] How to ascertain that what we are doing is the best?

The criteria for this are simple.

- a] It should give us satisfaction and
- b] it should be benefit to the mankind directly or indirectly.
- c] In the course of time our actions should be giving us maximum satisfaction and be maximally beneficial to the mankind.

Thus personal cleanliness, moderation in diet, talk, exercise, diet etc. fulfil a] and b] to a certain extent. Similarly all activities such as farming, craft, teaching etc. fulfil a] and b] when done honestly. c] is fulfilled when our activity helps to broaden our mind and that of the others. Thus learning Geeta and spreading its message, or practising NAMASMARAN and spreading its importance are activities which fulfil c].

Hence Lord advised Arjuna to fight the war while simultaneously focusing his attention on his true SELF i.e. Lord Krishna or PARAMA PURUSHA.

11] Is this explained in other way?

Yes. It has been conveyed that one who works in this way merges with Lord Krishna or true SELF eternally. One who practices such contemplation or meditation and focuses his total and reverent attention in the midpoint between the eye brows at the time of death merges with omniscient, eternal, controller, subtlest, benevolent LIGHT. This light of knowledge that illumines even the consciousness is unfathomable by intellect and is beyond every kind of darkness.

Focusing one's mind in the midpoint between eyebrows is of immense value and facilitates inward voyage towards true SELF and ultimately merger with Him. This process and the experience is common to everyone irrespective of the paths. This pedestal or state of being itself is called AKSHARA. Thus those who observe celibacy, those who pray, those who master all the senses and focus their all energies [PRAANA] in the middle of the eyebrows and chant OM KAR and leave their body all merge with the BRAHMA called PARAMA GATI.

Lord reiterates again that one who remembers Him with intense devotion easily merges with Him.

12] Is there any reference rebirth in this context?

Yes. Lord Krishna the cosmic consciousness personified assures that one who prays in this way does not get fettered by the veil of ignorance and in this way is never born as an ignorant human being.

He also states that all other efforts of mankind are like those of spider which gets trapped in its own web. They lead to repetition of births in the same ignorant planes. This is akin to failing repeatedly and remaining in the same standard ! Or this is akin to remaining at the same infantile mental level even as one grows in age. Or this can also be compared to remaining in the slumber and not waking up at all.

13] Is there any relevance to this from objective point of view? In other words does our consciousness have anything to do rest of the world?

Yes. The enlightened people live in the awareness of subtler realm and hence have the vision of thousands of cycles of four epochs [KRUTA, TRETA, DWAPAR & KALI] whereas even the deity Indra does not live enough to see this. Fourteen Indras have been said to be born and vanished during one day of Brahma which is equivalent to one thousand cycles of four epochs. Indra means mind also. Thus one can realise that one who transcends mind i.e. petty self enters the realm beyond time. This realm is constant and in this everything in universe appears, grows and disappears. This realm or consciousness is Lord Himself. This consciousness is within us, within everything. It is called AVYAKTA and AKSHARA.

Further Lord states that when a man passes away during day, during first half of the lunar month, during brighter half of the year viz. UTTARAYANA during which sun seems to pass from capricorn to cancer and when man has enough strength to focus his attention towards God, merges with God. Whereas one who passes away during

night, during later half of the lunar month, during six months when sun seems to pass from cancer to capricorn, and when man does not have enough strength to focus his attention to-wards God, he is reborn. According to some these states represent inner light and inner darkness.

14] What is the use of these details for us?

We realise that the beauty, love, happiness, harmony and everything aspired in life by most us is within us. This gives endows us with the finest art of living.

To simplify this we can compare this with the learning of gentle use of hands to play musical instruments. In absence of such learning we land up producing harsh and discordant noise. We can also compare it with painting. Without skill we land up spilling over colours dirtily.

Realisation of eternal nature in its essence enables to live life to its fullest extent and in a wholesome manner. This is true health.

15] Can we look up to same personalities as examples of healthy people?

Yes. Krishna, Adi Shankarcharya, Dnyaneshvar, Mahatma Phule, Chatripati Shivaji, Dr. Ambedkar, Karl Marx, Pandurang Shastri Athavale and in short all those who truly work in the best interest of mankind are examples of truly healthy people.

The Concept of Holistic Medicine

What is the present state of Medical field?

A lot has been written about holistic medicine. Several international, national and regional conferences also have been organized on holistic medicine. This interest in holistic medicine is really a healthy development. The credit for this goes to many open-minded individuals from medical as well as other fields. However holistic medicine has not been adequately understood, appreciated and practiced by most of us. It is viewed with suspicion and even certain degree of contempt by majority of individuals, partly because of prejudice, ignorance, rigid concepts

etc. and partly because of irresponsible statements and propaganda by quacks.

Let us take a look at the present state of affairs before going into the concept of holistic medicine. At present the field of medicine is divided into allopathy, homeopathy, ayurveda, unani, siddha, magnetotherapy, naturopathy etc. Some times medicine is also categorized as Tibetan medicine, Indian medicine, Chinese medicine, Western medicine etc. (This is not quite the same as preclinical, paraclinical, paramedical, nursing, specialities, superficialities etc., which are divisions but without conceptual differences. There may be methodological and technical differences but not conceptual. This in contrast to the division stated above, in which there are conceptual differences. In fact the degree of differences sets these divisions against one another and proponents of the individual divisions go to the extent of warring!). Why do such divisions exist in medicine alone? Why do not we have divisions such as Chinese physics, Indian chemistry and American electronics, in other sciences?

This is because 1] Medicine is a conceptual conglomeration of various concepts of different sciences, psychology, philosophy, ethics, art, traditions, ecosystems, etc. Since many of these vary with region, the medicine also is divided on the basis of region. This leads to differences in the concepts of human life to modes of treatment, at all levels. 2] It is also because of the degree of abstractness in medicine developed because of the nature of laboratory specific to medicine. Unlike laboratories in the field of physics and chemistry the laboratories in case of medicine are living organisms which show tremendous variability. The field of observation and knowledge are almost the same as the student or the observer viz. human being. The instincts, mind, emotions, thoughts, consciousness etc are very much abstract and do not lend themselves definite, predictable reproducible conclusions because they vary in the observed individuals as well as observers!

THE AUTHOR'S OTHER PUBLICATIONS

IN MARATHI

- 1] **Vaidyakiya Vyavasaya** : Vyavahar Aani Dhyeya.
[Ideal And Practical Aspects Of Medical Practice]
- 2] **Suryashodh** : [Novel On The Life Of Radical
Youths] Manovikasa Prakashana.
- 3] **Bhovara** [Reminiscences Of Sociomedical Work In
A Village] 2ND ed.
- 4] **Ginipig** : [Science Fiction] Coauthor : Laxman
Londhe. Manovikasa Prakashana.

T.V. SERIAL ON THIS WAS TELECAST ON DOORDARSHAN.

Thakava Ghalawa : Sphurti Milwa. [Positive Health]
Manovikasa Prakashan 4th ed.

Unhali, Hiwali Aani Pavsali Aajar :

[Seasonal Diseases And Their Treatment] Co-Authors :
Dr. K.P. Kulkarni And Dr. P.A. Shikarkhane.
Manovikasa Prakashana. 3rd ed.

Kamajeevan : Dnyan Aani Samadhaan : [Physiological
And Socio - Cultural Aspects Of Sexual Life] Manovikasa
Prakashana. 5th ed.

A compilation Of Articles And Short Stories, Useful In
Stress Management.

Amerikanaanchyaa Antarangaat [Reminiscences Of
Stay In U.S.A.]

Sahasranetra :: A New Understanding Of The World
Famous Hymn Vishnu Sahasranama [Tridal Prakashan,
Prarthana Samaj, Girgaon, Ph: 385 0192.]

- 11] Sampoorna Aarogyaasaathi Namasmaraan.
[Holistic Health And Namasmaraan]
- 12] Sampoorna Aarogyaachaa Vikaas. [Holistic
Health]
- 13] Kaamavidnyaan : Co-Authored.

- 14] Mhanaje Kay Hote? Tridal Prakashan, Prarthana Samaj, Girgaon, Ph. 385 0192.
- 15] Samyak Vaidyak : [Tridal Prakashan, Girgaon] [Holistic Medicine]
- 16] Chaitanya Saadhana : To Be Published.
- 17] Shaambhavi: A novel most suitable for producing movie, To Be Published.
- 18] Arogyachaa Arasaa : [New Concept In Evaluation Of One's Own Health.]
- 19] Acompilation Of Poems
- 20] Compilation Of Articles On Holistic Health All Marathi
- 21] Namasmaran [Implication of remembering God's name in day to day life]

IN ENGLISH

- 22] Text book of Physiology : Co-authored, JAYPEE PUBLISHERS.
- 23] Health in First Chapter of Geeta
- 24] Health in Second Chapter of Geeta
- 25] Health in Third Chapter of Geeta
- 26] Health in Fourth Chapter of Geeta
- 27] Health in Fifth Chapter of Geeta
- 28] Health in Sixth Chapter of Geeta
- 29] Health in Seventh Chapter of Geeta
- 30] Health in Eighth Chapter of Geeta
- 31] Whirlpool: To be published.
- 32] The art of Teaching Medicine: Co-authored.
- 33] A COMPILATION OF ARTICLES ON HOLISTIC MEDICINE
- 34] HOLISTIC HEALTH
- 35] A COMIPLATION OF ARTCILES ON SOCIAL ISSUES
- 36] Stress : Understanding and management –

A way to Total Well Being
Bhalani publishing House

IN HINDI

37] **SAMPORNA AROGYAKA RAJAMARGA**
[Implication of remembering God's name in day to day life]

BOOKS ON GEETA available on internet.

WEBSITE: <http://members.tripod.com/~kashalika/index.html>

Email: shriniwasjk@rediffmail.com

